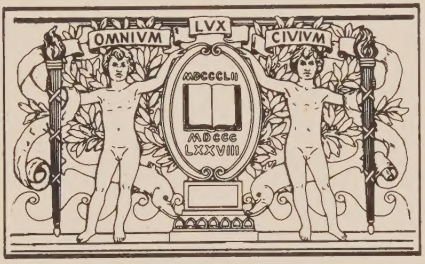

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ROYAL ROMANCES OF TO-DAY

THE TSARITSA.

ROYAL ROMANCES OF TO-DAY

BY

KELLOGG DURLAND

AUTHOR OF

"THE RED REIGN," "AMONG THE FIFE MINERS,"

ETC., ETC.

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TO

H. E. THE MARQUIS OF VILLALOBAR

A SLIGHT TOKEN OF A HIGH APPRECIATION

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"Your task is difficult," remarked a friend to whom I had just explained that I was writing the lives of the Empress of Russia, the Queen of Spain, and the Queen of Italy. "Your task is difficult, because these are three good Queens, and good Queens, like all good women, have no history." Now that I have told the stories of these three good Queens, I wonder if my friend will not grant that they have been worth the telling?

FOREWORD

In the year 1907, the Woman's Home Companion commissioned me to go to Russia to write the story of the early days, courtship and marriage of her whom the world knows to-day as the "Tsaritsa." The following year, the same periodical sent me to Italy to write a similar account of the life of Queen Elena; and in 1910 I was once more sent abroad, this time to Spain, to learn all about Queen Victoria Eugenie.

The chapters printed in the magazine articles constitute only a part of the material which I gathered on these three trips, and consequently the stories herewith presented are to my best knowledge and belief the most complete records of these three Queens, which have yet been gathered and published. It was necessary for me to rely almost entirely upon members of the several Courts of St. Petersburg, Madrid and Rome for my biographical data. In each capital I spent many months, cultivating the acquaintance of all who were in a position to give me this material, especially members of the entourages of these several sovereigns. Accuracy was always my prime aim and the greatest care has been taken to corroborate impressions and to check up each parti-

cle of information which has been utilised. I have every confidence that the details herewith presented may be relied upon by future biographers and historians. Readableness has in no instance led me to sacrifice, or in any way to exaggerate or alter literal facts.

I have endeavoured to present the stories of these three Queens mainly from the standpoint of the heart interest which attaches to the romances which have characterised each of their marriages.

I should be most ungracious if I were to omit expressing my cordial appreciation of the valued co-operation which I received in St. Petersburg from Harold Williams, Esq., from Miss Margaret Eager, for six years Nursery Governess to the Royal Family of Russia; and in Rome from Doctor Guido Pardo, whose energy, industry and wide knowledge of men and affairs in Italy were all placed so generously at my disposal; and in Madrid from El Señor Don Emilio M. de Torres, confidential Secretary to His Majesty King Alfonso XIII, and El Señor Don Pablo de Churruca of the Spanish Diplomatic Service.

The justification for the publication of this work in more or less permanent form lies in my belief in the verity and authenticity of every last detail, all of which were gathered at such considerable expenditure of time and labour. Material so carefully gathered and verified should be of certain service to future writers.

PART I

QUEEN VICTORIA EUGENIE OF SPAIN

PART I

QUEEN VICTORIA EUGENIE OF SPAIN

CHAPTER I

AN ISLAND PRINCESS

ONCE upon a time, not so many years ago, there lived on a lovely island of the sea, a beautiful, golden-haired, blue-eyed Princess. The mother of this Princess was kind and good to everybody on the island and all who knew her loved her. The father of the princess was a soldier, a warrior who led men to battle, and who sailed over distant seas to fight for the honour and glory of his country. The grandmother of the little Princess was a great Queen, known and revered by the whole world, for she enjoyed a long life and a long reign. The little Princess was born in the fiftieth year of the reign of the good old Queen and so the little Princess was called "the Jubilee baby."

The Jubilee baby became the favourite grandchild of the old Queen who loved to have the young Princess with her, and so it happened that the training of the Princess was largely at the knees of the great Queen,—and her nursery days were spent on the steps of a throne.

When the Princess was eight years old, her

soldier father was sent to a foreign land to fight in a cruel war. The ship that carried him and the soldiers who left their homes with him, stopped for a few days at the port of a friendly country and the officers, including the father of the Princess, got off the ship to visit the strange country. It was a pleasant land, a land of sunshine and flowers, where even in midwinter, the fragrance of roses and orange blossoms filled the air. The island home of the Princess was cold in winter, and harsh winds swept in from the sea. The Prince, seeing all the beauty of the new land, would have liked to linger in the balmy atmosphere where birds were as merry at Christmas as in his own land at Easter. But he was on a stern journey, fulfilling a great and responsible duty. The ship was about to start on to its destination—the land of discord and strife where war was being waged, and human lives were being sacrificed—where blood was running and suffering and sorrow came with each day's sun; the ship was about to start on, and the Prince, thinking of the country whither he was going, and of the land which he now was glimpsing like a beautiful dream, thought also of the home he had left and his fair-haired, darling daughter, her three baby brothers, and their mother whom he loved very dearly. Then he sat down and wrote a letter to the little Princess. It was the first time he had ever written a letter to her, because she was still a wee girl and had never left his side. In this letter he told her how beautiful was the land that

he then was visiting, and he went on to say to her: "Always be a good girl, and love your mother. If you do this, when you grow up and are big, you too, will travel, and you will come to this beautiful country. You will see for yourself that you will like it and how happy you will be here."

The little Princess was very pleased when she received this letter from her father of whom she was extremely proud, and being the only one she had from him treasured it like a relic. She never dreamed how wonderfully prophetic were the simple words he wrote.

One short month later the Prince was dead. The shadow of this loss deeply darkened the life of the little Princess and all her family, and indeed the whole country mourned. A few years passed and the little Princess grew up and was ever and always more beautiful and lovely of character, as well as of face and form. When she was eighteen, there came to visit her country the young ruler of the very land her father had visited on his last journey—the land which he told her she would one day visit and where she would be happy. The King of this land, as it happened, was then only nineteen years old, and in quest of a Princess to share his throne. When he saw the Princess of this story, he fell instantly in love with her, and she with him—and after a wooing and courtship they were married. So after all, the Princess did go to the land her father told her she would one day see, and now the "Jubilee Baby" is the Queen

of that country, and the people there have become as devoted to her as she is to them—and she is very, very happy.

Does this read like a pretty fairy tale, written for children? Possibly. But it isn't; at least, if it is a story and pretty, it is every word true, for "the Jubilee Baby" was Queen Victoria's thirty-second grandchild, the daughter of Princess Beatrice and Prince Henry of Battenberg. The Isle of Wight of Southern England was the home of the Battenbergs and Princess Victoria Eugenie Julia Ena—or Princess Ena, as she was generally called—was Queen Victoria's favourite grandchild. When Princess Ena was eight years old, her father, Prince Henry, went off to the Ashanti campaign in Africa and when his ship was detained a few days at Gibraltar, he ran up to Seville, from where he wrote the letter—the only letter he ever wrote to his little daughter—telling her that one day she would come to Spain and be happy. This letter was written in November and in December, Prince Henry died of a fever contracted in the deadly climate of that part of the African coast. Ten years later, King Alfonso XIII went to England, met Princess Ena and within the twelve month, they were married and now she is Queen Eugenie of Spain!

CHAPTER II

GIRLHOOD

PRINCESS VICTORIA EUGENIE JULIA ENA was born October 24, 1887. She enjoyed the distinction of being the first royal baby born in Scotland for precisely two hundred and eighty-seven years. Through her girlhood she was much with her grandmother, Queen Victoria of England, and she also enjoyed the particular interest of her godmother, the Empress Eugenie of France, who later on was largely instrumental in bringing about the meeting between the young King of Spain and her godchild which resulted in her elevation to a throne.

Princess Ena was the only daughter in a family of four children, and her childhood was spent much in the company of her brothers, whose studies and play she shared. Before she was twelve years old she had learned to ride like a boy, to manage a boat and had acquired considerable skill with the fishing rod. After the death of her father, Prince Henry of Battenberg, Princess Ena assisted her mother in the administration of the Isle of Wight, which was the particular bailiwick of her family. Doubtless the early lessons of administration which she learned at this time was

the kind of preparation for the administrative duties of Queen, which, after her marriage, were to devolve upon her.

She received an education befitting a Princess of Great Britain. When still very young she had acquired a knowledge of French and German, and this practice in mastering new languages proved of great value later when she came to take up Spanish—a rich and full-throated tongue in which she became fluent within a few months.

Princess Ena also showed a decided talent for music and she is not only a ready, skilful pianist, but she also composes music.

Her young life was happy. She was the favourite, not only of Queen Victoria and Empress Eugenie, but of all the Royal family in England. There was no touch of the hard and sordid in those years. She dwelt in the midst of wholesome, happy people and always in beautiful places. The Isle of Wight, her home, is a sweet, tranquil haven, remote from the frequented paths of the world, far from the hurry and noise and dirt of modern England. In Spring and Summer it is like a great garden with abiding places set therein.

Balmoral in Scotland, where she was born and where she frequently lived, especially when her grandmother, Queen Victoria, was in residence in Scotland, is one of the most glorious spots in Britain. The magnificent Royal Park is widely encircled by the rugged mountains of that Northland. The river Dee, famed in song and story, runs close

to hand. This Northland is more mountainous and stern than Ayr or Dumfries, the land of Bobbie Burns, and as instinct with tradition of the fighting Jacobite times as the Border country—the land of Scott—or Loch Leven with its memories of Queen Mary. Princess Ena revelled in the stirring past as she breathed the strong air of the Cairngorms, growing physically strong and sturdy, innocent of the Destiny which was to shape her life and make her a Mother of Kings.

One winter Princess Henry of Battenberg went to Egypt, taking with her her four children. This proved a memorable year to Princess Ena, for she became familiar with new surroundings and acquainted with ancient civilisations, in which she evinced a remarkable interest. Here, too, the Princess had her first experience away from royal precincts, as the winter was mostly spent in the Cataract Hotel at Aswan. It was the wish of Princess Henry that she and her children be treated precisely as the other guests of the hotel were treated, and the Princess Ena came to know many people who were of a world far removed from her own.

Many stories are told in Egypt to-day of the laughing golden-haired English Princess who was never so weary as to cease from fun and mischief, and many a prank instigated by her and her brothers is recalled. Her brightness and abounding good nature were widely appreciated and the memory she has left there is sweet and good.

Christmas Day in a foreign land is always dull

and dreary, and English people, perhaps, miss home on this day above all others in the year.

The manager of the Cataract Hotel—Herr Steiger—being anxious to lift in some measure the pall of gloom which hung over his guests that Christmas planned a little surprise which he sprang at the dinner hour. Toward the close of the meal the lights in the dining salon were suddenly extinguished and a band of picturesque Orientals entered the room bearing lighted tapers and trays of gifts. Their fantastic garb of white bournous, red fez and white turbans looked weirdly strange against the darkness and as the file approached the table where sat the royal party a burst of loud applause came spontaneously from the guests at the other tables. No sooner had the first defile circled round the royal table than other similar groups entered the room and ranged around the other tables. In a moment of silence the Princess Ena was heard to exclaim: "Oh! how nice of Herr Steiger to have given this pleasure to everyone and not only to us!"

This charming consideration for others is a characteristic of her nature which has deepened with years and has proved one of the qualities which so quickly endeared her to the people of her adopted land.

At the age of eighteen Princess Ena had her formal "coming out" into Society. The event took place at the Infirmary Ball at Ryde, and immediately after she was presented at Windsor and en-

tered upon a gay season in London. It was toward the end of this very first season that she met for the first time the impetuous and dashing young man who at first sight of her surrendered his heart and in record time led her up the steps of a throne to share with him the ermine of sovereignty.

In their meeting and courtship lies a tale of pure romance. No story of any "castle in Spain" runs more delightfully, and no tale of the storied Alhambra quickens the pulse beats faster.

Don Alfonso XIII of Spain, who was literally born a king, his father having died several months before his birth, at the early age of 28, was still in his teens when his court and ministers began to drop thinly veiled hints concerning a possible alliance for the young sovereign. The King from earliest boyhood had showed that he had a mind and determination of his own, and whenever the matter of his marriage was broached he would make reply: "I shall marry a princess who takes my fancy, and nobody else. I want to love my wife." A noble and worthy ambition surely, especially for a king!

The Emperor of Germany had long hoped to arrange a match between the King of Spain and a German princess, while several princesses in other countries of Europe nourished secret hopes that they might one day sit on the Spanish throne. Political exigencies, however, demanded an English princess if a suitable and acceptable one could be found for the youthful monarch.

During the spring of Don Alfonso's twentieth year, the very year of Princess Ena's coming out, he went with a regal suite to London. Wiseacres had picked Princess Patricia of Connaught as the probable choice of the dashing young sovereign. Indeed the whispers of Mayfair drawing-rooms had the match entirely arranged long before the King arrived in London.

June in London is often a delightful and beautiful month—a month of awakening surprises, when the trees and flowers come quickly into bloom and blossom through the spring haze. The June week chosen for the visit of the Spanish King, however, proved a disappointing exception, for mist and drizzling rain characterised the period of his stay, but all the rain and dampness of Britain, if concentrated in London, would not have marred the indefatigable energy of this strenuous young man, who not only participated in all the festivities arranged for him by the committees of the Court and Municipality, but also managed to do much extra sight-seeing and, most important of all, to make up his mind which princess should be the next Queen of Spain—his bride.

Despite the gossips who already had Princess Patricia the affianced bride of the young King, when these two met it was evident that neither attracted the other. Far too often in the history of nations personal attraction has not been a dominating influence in royal marriages. If reasons of state have demanded the marriage the individuals

THE QUEEN OF SPAIN.

have sunk their own feelings, surrendered their personal happiness—and lived on, perpetual victims of the political demands of their respective states. But Don Alfonso XIII had no desire to martyr himself in this way. No more the Princess Patricia.

The late King Edward had arranged dinners, dances and fêtes in Buckingham Palace in honour of the King of Spain. There were gathered the very flower of the youth of Britain. Don Alfonso was seen to be instantly struck by the sight of a certain golden-haired girl whom he saw flitting here and there across the rooms.

"Who is she?" he finally inquired.

"Princess Ena of Battenberg," was the reply.

The two were presented. They talked together and were visibly interested in each other. They met again and each day so long as the King remained in London.

A few months later, King Alfonso confessed that the first moment he saw Princess Ena, he determined that she was the one who must share the responsibilities of his Kingdom with him, and that if his suit were not accepted by the Princess, or if any reasons of State intervened to prevent the marriage, his country would go without a queen so long as he lived. Fortunately, no reasons of State developed to hinder the marriage and the one obstacle raised by the Church was overcome when the Princess declared her readiness to accept the Roman Catholic Faith, for King Alfonso is

known as His Most Catholic Majesty, and church influence, though waning, is still strong in Spain.

The marriage was favoured and encouraged by King Edward, that gracious and genial Uncle of Europe, and his sanction was sufficiently strong to bring about what was to King Alfonso and to Spain an exceedingly desirable union. No public announcement of the betrothal was made for six months after the visit to England, but rumour carried abroad the suspicions which were later confirmed.

CHAPTER III

COURTSHIP

MUCH curiosity was exhibited upon the return of King Alfonso to Madrid on the part of his courtiers. Many times and often intimates of the King pressed him indirectly in regard to this great secret, but Don Alfonso preserved a careful silence. Shortly after this visit, the King bought a racing yacht, and, upon its arrival, gave a launching party to inspect his new possession. As yet the yacht had not been named, and the King invited his guests to suggest an appropriate name. Someone suggested that it be named after himself, but the King shook his head at this; then one bolder than the rest slyly suggested that the name of the future Queen of Spain would be appropriate. "Excellent," said his Majesty, "and now you will please inform me what is the name of the lady?" "Ah, sir," replied the other, "on that momentous point we are as yet without information." "Nevertheless," said the King, "it is a good suggestion," and forthwith sent instructions that the new yacht be named "Queen X." The Spanish newspapers quoted the story of the King's little joke and concluded who the real Queen was to be from the fact that the words were printed in

English, a conclusion that was very soon confirmed.

Towards the close of January, following the visit to London, a Chamberlain of the King's arrived at Biarritz in southern France, near to the border of Spain, and two days later the King, travelling incognito, left his capital for the same frontier, and it immediately became an open secret that the time of the public betrothal was at hand.

The day following the King's arrival he joined the party of Princess Frederica of Hanover and Prince Alexander of Battenberg, Princess Henry of Battenberg—and Princess Ena. That very afternoon King Alfonso and his future Queen were publicly seen together for the first time in a motor drive along the frontier. The Press of the world was unanimous in its approval of the match, and for the most part stating that it was really a marriage of affection, reasons of State happily harmonising with the impulses of the royal hearts. The courtship which followed was very boy and girl-like according to all intimate accounts. Little gifts were exchanged and the two were constantly in each other's company, dodging as much as possible public gaze. They strolled many miles together alone and unattended through the parks and woods and, on more than one tree carved interlaced hearts and each other's initials just like lovers the whole world over.

One day the happy lovers were seen to proceed to a carefully selected spot where two round holes

had been freshly dug out of the earth. A gardener stood nearby, apparently awaiting their coming, for in his arms he carried two small fir plants.

"This one is mine," exclaimed the King, eagerly taking one.

"And this one is mine," rejoined the Princess.

Each having taken a plant they set about planting them.

"We must plant the trees side by side," said the King, "so that they may always remind us of these never-to-be-forgotten days."

The plants were set in place and each taking a spade they began to cover the roots with earth.

The Princess finished her task first, and dropping her spade stood watching the King, laughing merrily all the while. At last the King, pausing for a moment, said:

"There is no doubt about it, I am very awkward! I must put in a month with the engineers!"

That day King Alfonso handed Princess Ena a beautiful heart set with diamonds and rubies, one of the earliest gifts to his bride-to-be.

One day they sped off into the country in the King's motor car. Alighting just outside of the little village of Cambo they entered the village on foot. Passing a shop where postcards were on sale they went in and selected several of the picture cards to send to King Edward and Queen Maria Cristina, the Queen Mother of Spain. The village shop-keeper did not recognise his distinguished customers and began to question them if they knew

when the King and Princess would come to Cambo, which they had not yet visited. King Alfonso and his fiancée, inwardly smiling, made an evasive reply indicating that they knew nothing about the Royal arrangements. After they had gone out the shopkeeper was apprised of the identity of his recent customers and his surprise resulted in his complete bewilderment.

On Friday, the 27th of January, the Princess crossed into Spain for the first time. She and the King were accompanied by her mother, the Marquis of Viana and the Marquis of Villalobar; the party motored over the International Bridge which marks and connects the borders of the two countries and, as the Princess alighted on Spanish soil, the Marquis of Villalobar remarked to the Princess: "Señora we have set foot on Spanish territory," to which the Princess gave answer: "I am delighted that this moment has arrived; it fills me with joy and never shall I forget the first day on which I trod the soil of Spain." The English party then proceeded to the Palace of Miramar at San Sebastian, where they were the guests of the Queen Mother.

A San Sebastian newspaper, commenting upon the appearance of Princess Victoria Eugenie said: "She is very beautiful, very elegant, very sympathetic." These three characteristics indeed are the predominant features of her character. She has beauty, an aristocratic carriage, and her nature is deeply sympathetic.

This first visit of Princess Ena to Spain was necessarily of brief duration and, pending the arrangements of State for the marriage, the King was obliged to return to Madrid while his fiancée proceeded to Paris, there to prepare her trousseau. Don Alfonso designated his own Chamberlain—the Marquis of Villalobar—to accompany her to the French capital and there to wait attendance upon her. Simultaneously with her arrival in Paris, Don Alfonso remembered that the Princess had no automobile in France, so he telegraphed to his Chamberlain to hire one immediately for his fiancée's use. The Chamberlain telegraphed back to the King that there was not a car to be hired in Paris good enough for the Princess, whereupon Don Alfonso wired instructions for a Panhard car to be purchased and sent the next morning to the hotel where the Princess was staying.

The King went at this time to pay an official visit to his province of Valencia and wrote to the Princess of the beautiful oranges growing there, at which the Princess manifested a desire to have some. One morning, the Marquis of Villalobar received a telegram from the King advising him that he was sending a few oranges for the Princess by a certain train and directing him to meet the train at the station and convey the fruit directly to the Princess. The telegram did not state the quantity of oranges which were being sent, and the Marquis was at a loss to know whether it would be a basketful of fruit which could be conveyed in a cab, or a

truck load. Upon the arrival of the train, the astonished Chamberlain beheld the largest orange tree he had ever seen, the branches bowed with ripe fruit!

While the necessary preparations were in progress for the Royal Wedding, King Alfonso visited his betrothed at her home in the Isle of Wight. This visit, which lasted three weeks, was regarded as strictly private and during these three weeks the Royal wooing progressed under idyllic conditions. It was a period of country walks and drives, simple picnic parties, private entertainment and family dinner parties. During this visit at Osborne Cottage, the King and Princess planted a tree in commemoration of their betrothal, and during this time also His Majesty took his first lessons in the ancient Scottish game of golf, at which he later became most proficient. Their seclusion was only intruded upon by the most necessary of formal functions—a visit of respect by the Spanish Ambassador to London, by the Commander of the Royal Yacht Squadron, and certain other dignitaries whom etiquette obliged to wait upon the King. Don Alfonso lived up to his reputation of being the surest shot in Spain when on one day the Isle of Wight Gun Club held an exhibition shoot, the first prize of which was won by the visiting sovereign, who broke eight clay birds out of ten in a high wind.

Toward the close of the visit the Royal party proceeded to London for a short stay at Bucking-

ham Palace. During the few days spent in London, Don Alfonso and his fiancée shopped together publicly in the streets of London, attended several theatrical performances and visited Madame Tussaud's wax works where were brand new wax models of himself and his wife to be. On the 4th of May Don Alfonso returned to his own country. On Thursday, the 24th of the same month, Princess Victoria Eugenie set out for the land where she was henceforth to live as Queen.

She travelled from England via Dover and Calais. A friend who met her on her landing upon French soil remarked how sad she seemed, whereupon she replied: "It is nothing—I cannot help feeling moved when I think that I am leaving the country where I have spent so many happy days, to go toward the unknown." That night she slept not at all. Her emotions held full sway. She passed over in sweet reverie the scenes of her sheltered girlhood in the Island home and in the charming Highlands of Scotland; and then she fondly remembered the letter her father wrote her years and years before, the only letter she had ever had from him whom she had loved so dearly, in which he had told her that one day she would come to the fair land where he was tarrying for a night —and that she would be happy there.

When first I saw Princess Ena—several years later, when she was Queen Victoria Eugenie—she had this same wistful, sorrowful expression. As I gazed into her calm eyes I instantly appreciated

the great depth of feeling and beauty of nature which lay beneath the tranquil expression of her lovely features. I had been with Señor Torres, the able and amiable confidential secretary of the King, in the Royal Palace at Madrid. As I left him and tried to thread my way quite alone through the intricate maze of palace halls toward the court, I came suddenly and unexpectedly upon the King and Queen. Her Majesty was in deep black, for it was but a day or two after the death of her beloved Uncle King Edward VII of England. Her usually bright face and rosy cheeks were ashen white, and her countenance bore a saddened look which commanded sympathy. Her fair hair was soft and golden against her mourning garb and despite her grief there was dignity and majesty in her carriage. Perhaps the lines which shadowed her pale face had not come solely with her latest suffering, for in the interim of years—few as they were—more than one sore trial had been hers. Indeed, during the few short days that elapsed between her crossing the frontier of Spain and her reception into the Royal Palace as bride and Queen there occurred her baptism of blood which was to try her beyond anything she had yet endured and which was to test to the uttermost the qualities which above all others are essential to queenship.

Princess Ena came to her throne through tragic and dramatic scenes, and the spirit which she manifested in the midst of trying and harrowing cir-

cumstances convinced the Spanish people for good and all that their King had not erred in wooing the golden-haired Princess from the little Isle just off the coast of Southern England. She proved at once that she is of the stuff of which great queens are made—and that she is indeed a born mother of kings.

CHAPTER IV

A ROYAL WEDDING

THE train which carried Princess Ena across France toward her unknown Destiny approached the Spanish frontier at dawn. On the platform of the first station within the borders of Spain paced the awaiting bridegroom,—eager, impatient, anxious. He smoked cigarette after cigarette as the minutes went by, pausing ever and anon to peer into the gloom which still lingered of the passing night as if to catch the first sight of the coming train. When at last it arrived and the Princess had alighted, her very first act was one which made an appeal to the Spanish people. Turning almost directly from the group of ministers, generals and courtiers who were there to greet her, she stepped toward the Mayor of the little village who was surrounded by a group of peasant delegates, and extending her hand for him to kiss, she graciously accepted the bouquet which he handed to her. This man was a field labourer—a peasant—and his comrades were all of the soil. Thus the first homage which she received and acknowledged was that which came directly from the people.

The evening of the day of her arrival at Madrid she seized a splendid opportunity. In the town

of Badajoz, the capital of the Province of Estremadura, was a man condemned to death and whose sentence was to have been carried out the day following the arrival of the bride-elect. On the evening of her arrival in Spain, the people of the town, representatives of all classes, telegraphed to the Princess an earnest petition beseeching her to exercise her influence with the King for him to exercise his prerogative of Royal clemency and pardon the condemned man. The Princess went immediately to the King and told him that almost the first message she had received upon her arrival in Spain was this petition asking her to save the life of a man. This wedding present, she said, would please her more than any gift she might receive. King Alfonso instantly granted her request and the Royal pardon was despatched by telegraph, arriving at Badajoz less than one hour before the sentence was to have been carried out. Upon receipt of the news, all the bells of the town were set ringing and there was a scene of extraordinary demonstration; the whole community gathering in the streets crying: "Long live Queen Victoria Eugenie."

Thursday the 31st of May, 1906, had been appointed for the wedding. The day broke bright and clear in Madrid, a glorious sun tempered by a cooling breeze shone throughout the day and with not a cloud in the sky. The King arrived at the Palace of the Pardo just outside of Madrid where the Princess and her suite had remained during

the few days preceding the wedding, in a motor car at 6.30 in the morning; he appeared in the uniform of an Admiral. The first act of the day was an attendance at Mass in company with his bride-elect. Shortly after 8 o'clock the couple were driven in an electric brougham straight to the Ministry of Marine where the Princess donned her bridal robes. In this she was assisted by ladies-in-waiting, who had come in her suite from London, the last touch being added by Queen Maria Cristina who placed upon the head of the Princess the bridal veil. This veil was of Alençon lace and was the very one worn by herself at the time of her marriage to King Alfonso XII. This veil is being carefully preserved by Queen Victoria, who says that at the marriage of her first daughter she hopes to place it upon her head.

In Spain it is customary for the bridegroom to present his bride with her wedding gown; this is a universal custom common in all ranks of society. Don Alfonso, aided by his Royal Mother, had had prepared one of the most elaborate and exquisitely embroidered gowns ever seen at the Spanish Court. Forty of the most expert Spanish women were engaged for fifty-six days in making this wonderful creation. Or, to put it another way, one woman, working constantly every day of the year, Sundays excepted, would have required almost precisely seven years to the task! The material was of the richest white satin and cloth of silver, cut in the style of dress known as Louis XVI. The dress

"To the Marquis of Villalobar.
The end crowns the work."

vanced and took their places before the altar. After kneeling for a short period, King Alfonso rose, and passing behind the Princess approached his mother, who was on the bride's left, and knelt and kissed her hand. Queen Cristina, bending over, affectionately embraced her son who thereupon returned to his *prie-dieu* before the altar. Following the bridegroom's example Princess Victoria Eugenie descended the altar steps and passed down the nave to where her mother stood beside the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, and warmly embraced her. The Princess then returned to the altar and the religious ceremony began.

Cardinal Sancha, arrayed in his Pontifical robes and having on either side the assisting bishops, gave his archiepiscopal crozier to the Master of Ceremonies, and addressed King Alfonso and his bride as follows:

"High and Mighty Señor Don Alfonso XIII, of Bourbon and Austria, Catholic King of Spain, I demand of your Majesty, as I also demand of your Royal Highness Victoria Eugenie Julia Ena Maria Cristina, Princess of Battenberg, to say if you know of any impediment against the celebration of this marriage, or against the validity or legality; That is to say, if there exists between your Majesty and your Royal Highness any impediment either of consanguinity, affinity, or spiritual relationship; if you have made a vow of chastity or of religion; and, finally, if there is any other impediment, your

Majesty and your Royal Highness shall declare it. And the same I demand of all those here present. For the second and the third time I require that if there exist any impediment whatsoever you shall freely make it known."

Having concluded these questions, the Cardinal paused for a while, and then, turning to the Princess, said:

"Victoria Eugenie Julia Ena Maria Cristina, Princess of Battenberg, does your Royal Highness desire to have Don Alfonso XIII, of Bourbon and Austria, Catholic King of Spain, for your lawful spouse and husband by words *de presente,* as is ordained by the Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church?"

This was a very solemn moment, and not a whisper broke the almost painful silence. All eyes were turned toward the Princess who replied, in a clear voice:

"Yes, I do desire him." (Si, quiero.)

His Eminence then said:

"Does your Royal Highness consent to be the lawful spouse and wife of the high and mighty Señor Don Alfonso XIII, of Bourbon and Austria, Catholic King of Spain?"

Looking at His Majesty, Princess Victoria Eugenie replied, in clear tones:

"Yes, I consent." (Si, otorgo.)

Continuing, Cardinal Sancha asked:

"Does your Royal Highness accept the said Señor Don Alfonso XIII, of Bourbon and Aus-

tria, King of Spain, for your lawful spouse and husband?"

With even stronger emphasis, the Princess replied:

"Yes, I accept him." (Si, recibo.)

Cardinal Sancha thereupon asked the three questions, in identical terms of King Alfonso. His Majesty, with his eyes fixed upon his bride, and in a strong and clear voice, which was distinctly heard in every part of the church, answered to the several questions, "I desire," "I consent," and "I accept."

At this moment, Princess Ena betrayed emotion and glanced toward the place where her mother sat. Queen Maria Cristina was scarcely able to restrain her tears and looked alternately from the King to his bride and from the bride to her son. King Alfonso, who was perfectly calm, gave his hand to the Princess according to the directions of the Master of the Ceremonies, and while the Royal couple had their hands joined, Cardinal Sancha took his archiepiscopal staff and said:

"And I, on the part of Almighty God and of the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, and of the Holy Mother Church, do join in matrimony your Majesty, Don Alfonso XIII, of Bourbon and Austria, Catholic King of Spain, to your Royal Highness, Victoria Eugenie Julia Ena Maria Cristina, Princess of Battenberg, and I confirm this Sacrament of matrimony in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—AMEN."

Then the Bridal Mass began, the King and

Queen kneeling, and as the swell of music filled the church and died away, a faintly tinkling bell announced the Elevation of the Host. All knelt with heads bowed low—the most impressive moment of great silence broken only by the clinking of swords and the hum of distant voices outside the church. Mass over, the Royal bride and bridegroom proceeded to the daïs. A little lower down the Queen-Mother, in her beautiful robes and splendid jewels, stood beside her Chair of State, while kneeling on either side were the heralds, in their gorgeous uniforms. Princess Victoria Eugenie, now Queen of Spain, lovely, young, dignified and looking "every inch a Queen," standing beside the youthful and most charming King-Bridegroom, whose face was beaming with proud happiness, all made a picture, touching, beautiful and never to be forgotten by any of those present.

Then came a most picturesque and ideal scene. The newly-married Royal pair proceeded arm-in-arm to the spot nearby where formerly a grand old monastery had stood, and where there still remains a ruined cloister, and here the register was signed, the King having chosen this spot a few days before the wedding. One corner of the cloister had been screened off with magnificent tapestries of world-wide renown, on which were depicted scenes from Don Quixote; on a wide table, covered with crimson cloth, stood the necessary implements—a silver inkstand, pens, and the books in which the signatures were to be entered. The procession of

Royal personages who followed the bride and bridegroom in pairs through the quaint old cloister was led by the Prince of Wales, who conducted the Queen-Mother; then came the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria with the Princess of Wales, followed by the other Royalties in order of rank.

On the return of the procession to the church, the assemblage dispersed according to Spanish Court etiquette, in order of precedence, commencing with the lowest, each couple advancing to the daïs, where they bowed and curtsied to the King and Queen, who were seated in their Chairs of State. The Prince and Princess of Wales were the last of the Royal guests to go. The Queen-Mother then rose, and, advancing to the front of the daïs, made a reverence to her son and his bride, both of whom rose simultaneously and returned the salutation. Last of all the Royal personages, the King and Queen passed down the nave under the baldaquin and the gorgeous scene melted away.

Just before midday, the sound of saluting cannon announced to all that the King and Queen had left the church, and the procession started for the palace in the following order:

THE BRONZE LANDAU
The Kings of Arms.
STATE CARRIAGE
Miss Cochrane
Lord and Lady William Cecil
Gentlemen-in-Waiting on Her Majesty the Queen.

STATE CARRIAGE

Her Majesty Queen Maria Cristina's
Mistress of the Robes
The First Huntsman
Gentlemen-of-the-Chamber-in-Waiting on
His Majesty the King.

SEMI-GALA CARRIAGE

Mistress of the Robes of the Palace
Grand Chamberlain of Queen Maria Cristina.

STATE CARRIAGE

Superior Chief of the Palace
Grand Chamberlain of their Majesties
Commandant-General of the Halberdiers.

SEMI-GALA CARRIAGE

Princes Leopold and Maurice of Battenberg

STATE CARRIAGE

Princess Marie of Battenberg
(Princess of Erbach-Schönberg)
Prince Alexander of Teck
Prince Alexander of Battenberg.

CARRIAGE

The Infante Don Alfonso of Orleans
Princes Rainer and Philip of Bourbon.

SEMI-GALA CARRIAGE

The Infantas Doña Paz and Doña Eulalia.

STATE CARRIAGE

The Infantas Doña Maria Teresa and Doña
Maria Isabel
The Infante Don Fernando of Bavaria and Prince
Gennaro of Bourbon.

GALA CARRIAGE
Princess Frederica of Hanover
Princess Alexander of Teck.

COACH OF THE DUCAL CROWN
The Duchess of Saxe-Coburg
Princess Beatrice of Saxe-Coburg
Prince Henry of Prussia.

THE AMARANTH COACH
Prince Eugene of Sweden
Crown Prince of Monaco
Princes Louis Ferdinand and Alfonso of Bavaria.

THE CIPHER COACH
The Duke and Duchess of Genoa
Prince Albert of Prussia
Prince Andrew of Greece.

THE TORTOISE-SHELL COACH
Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria
Crown Prince of Portugal
Prince Albert of Belgium
The Grand Duke Vladimir of Russia.

GALA CARRIAGE
The Prince and Princess of Wales.

THE MAHOGANY COACH
Her Majesty the Queen, Doña Maria Cristina
Princess Henry of Battenberg
The Infante Don Carlos
The Infante Don Alfonso (Heir-presumptive).

THE COACH OF GOLD PANELS
(Unoccupied)

THE CROWN COACH
Their Majesties the KING and QUEEN.

The spectacle along the route of the return journey was one of indescribable rejoicing and excitement. The Pageant was magnificent, and the procession took nearly an hour to pass. The batteries of artillery thundered out a royal salute, trumpets blared, the bells of the churches pealed forth, and the populace raised a mighty roar of acclamation. Coach after coach passed along the route—each to be greeted with cheers by the delighted crowds. The beautiful "mahogany coach," in which were seated Queen Cristina, Princess Henry of Battenberg, Don Carlos, and his son Don Alfonso, came in for a specially warm greeting. That containing the Prince and Princess of Wales was also received with shouts of welcome. At last came that which most of all the multitude had assembled to see, and to greet with demonstrations of the greatest enthusiasm—the coach of the Royal Crown drawn by eight superb horses, with nodding white plumes, and containing the Royal couple. That the young King and his beautiful bride were immensely popular there could be no doubt. One had only to hear the hearty and repeated cries of "Viva el Rey!" "Viva la Reina!" to know that the young couple had won the hearts of the people and all Spain was rejoicing at their wedding.

CHAPTER V

A BAPTISM OF BLOOD

THE last street to be traversed was the Calle Mayor. All the world remembers how, as the end of the street was almost reached, a huge bouquet in which was hidden a small iron casket was tossed from a balcony, striking immediately in front of the royal carriage. With a tremendous roar, the casket exploded, killing more than thirty persons and wounding over one hundred, besides killing and maiming a number of horses. People in front of the royal carriage were killed, and behind the carriage, and even on the balconies above the street. I have seen the effect of many bombs—in Russia and the Caucasus—but never have I seen the results of a bomb as extensive as this one. Great chunks were literally gouged out of huge granite blocks in nearby buildings, and people on the balconies at a distance where safety would seem absolute met instant death. To this day the traces of this bomb are to be seen in the Calle Mayor, to my thinking one of the most curious and interesting sights in all Madrid.

The smoke had not cleared when the King, taking the head of his bride and Queen between both his hands, kissed her tenderly.

"Are you wounded?" he anxiously asked.

"No, no, I am not hurt. I swear it," she replied.

The King threw open the carriage door and as he stepped out, calmly saluted a flag which happened to be fluttering near by. Then he assisted the Queen, whose beautiful wedding gown became smirched with blood.

According to an ancient Spanish custom a so-called "carriage of respect" was immediately behind the royal coach, a carriage which apparently was originally designed for any emergency. The King called for this carriage and after seeing the Queen comfortably seated he turned to his equerries and in a clear voice said: "Very slowly to the Palace."

Arrived at the Palace, the King sprang lightly to the ground, and, having given his hand to the Queen, their Majesties ascended the flight of steps with ceremonious deportment, as if nothing untoward had occurred. The King saluted all the Princes in accordance with the demands of etiquette; and when one of the Royal guests asked him if he remembered that this was the anniversary of the attempt in the Rue de Rohan, in Paris, he replied with inimitable spirit, "Yes, I remember, and I notice that the bomb has grown."

As soon as the King had arrived in the Palace he asked for exact information as to the number of victims. He received the reply, "It is not yet possible to know; we only know that there are many dead and many wounded." Then the King passed

his hand across his forehead, and, as if the words came from the bottom of his heart, said slowly, "Now I feel what it is to be King; and I feel it because if I were not King I might have had the consolation of tears in the presence of so much blood and so many victims." His words were echoed in the heart of his young Queen who was, indeed, coming into her queenship under stress and trial.

The next morning the King and his bride, evading the court guard, swept out of the Palace gates in a motor car and slowly traversed the main streets of the city without escort or guard. Every inch of the way their Majesties were frantically cheered by the populace who appreciated their courage and considerateness in thus proving to the world at large that they had suffered no injury. Queen Victoria as she was henceforth to be known, acknowledged the salutations by bowing continuously to right and to left and constantly waving her handkerchief in greeting to the people.

The members of the Royal Household were beside themselves with fear when they saw the King and Queen, in an automobile, pass out of the Palace gates into the city absolutely unarmed and unescorted. But the King was wise that day. He threw both himself and his Queen-bride on to the honour of the people. As the car moved through the crowded thoroughfares, the people were first stunned with amazement and then bewilderment gave place to a delirium of joyous enthusiasm.

Eager hands grasped the car to pull and push it. Women fought desperately to get close to the brave couple, and the Queen's dress was actually torn to shreds by the multitude who sought to kiss the hem of her garment. When they returned to the Palace, it was 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Thus began the Queenship of the little English Princess who heretofore had led a quiet, sheltered life in her island home and among the Scottish braes and and moors and in the tranquil atmosphere of the Court of St. James.

Queen Victoria at this time may have recalled the lines of George Meredith:

> "We see in mould the Rose unfold,
> The Soul through blood and tears."

Verily the soul of Princess Ena was tempered by fire and brought to its fulness through blood and tears on the day when she became at once a wife and a Queen.

CHAPTER VI

WINNING A NATION'S LOVE

DON ALFONSO took his bride at once from the Royal Palace at Madrid to the Palace of La Granja (the Grange or farm-house) behind the Guadarrama Mountains, in Castile, for their honeymoon. This palace is situated on a slightly pinnacled hill four thousand feet above the level of the sea, a veritable "Castle in the Air." La Granja is surrounded by lovely woods, a garden which includes some three hundred and sixty acres, probably the finest in Spain, and even Versailles cannot boast of more numerous or lovelier fountains than this charming country residence. The laying out of the gardens alone cost eight millions of dollars. It is easy to understand why King Alfonso selected this spot for the honeymoon; it is the one spot in Spain, above all others, where royal lovers might hope to find seclusion amidst bowers of foliage musical with birds, and where they might hope to wipe from their recollection the vivid memories of the tragic scene of their wedding day.

Spain is one of the richest of countries in regard to the number of its palaces. Until the reign of Philip II, the Kings of Spain did not maintain any one permanent Royal residence,

but journeyed from region to region, maintaining a Palace in practically every district of the country, and, as a result of this custom much of the history of Spain is to be found and embodied and crystallised in the various Castles which are inherited by the Royal family of to-day. There is the Alcazar at Seville, which is associated with Pedro the Cruel. There is the Retiro, built to divert the attention of Philip IV from the decay and backsliding of his country; the Escorial in which the gloomy and melancholy Philip II has perpetuated his own memory in stone; and La Granja, which marks the bitterness and humiliation of Cristina before Garca and his rude soldiery; and Miramar at San Sebastian, in which a widowed Queen secluded herself to mourn the loss of her kingly spouse! Time was indeed when, within comparatively easy distance of Madrid, there were no less than thirty-five Royal residences; today only five of these, however, are still kept up, but throughout the rest of the country are many other Palaces.

It would be indeed a delightful task to write an entire book on the palaces of the Kings of Spain. El Pardo, Aranjuez, Miramar, El Escorial, El Alcazar and the Royal Palace of Madrid, but even then it would indeed be difficult to describe in words the beauty and the wondrous maze and labyrinths of woodland and garden; the galleries of tapestry and painting; the statutes; the armory; the varied treasures which they all contain. George

Borrow, who early made familiar to the English-speaking world the wondrous beauties and treasure houses of all Spain, waxed most eloquent over the palace of Alcazar at Seville. "Cold, cold must be the heart," exclaimed Borrow at the Alcazar, "which can remain insensible to the beauties of this magic scene. Often have I shed tears of rapture whilst I beheld it and listened to the thrush and the nightingale piping forth their melodious songs in the woods and inhaled the breeze laden with the perfume of the thousand orange gardens of Seville." La Granja, however, remains the favourite abiding place of all the present Royal family, hallowed by the sweet memories of honeymoon days.

Each summer the Royal family have returned to La Granja for two months. Here as nowhere else the Queen leads a life of charming simplicity, a life almost like that she was accustomed to in England. Here the King and Queen have but little company. They walk and ride and drive together. The King is a keen sportsman and while he shoots, the Queen goes a-fishing. Trout are abundant in the streams that come dashing down from the higher mountains and she is adept at landing the speckled beauties—only she will not bait her own hooks!

A golf course has been laid out and at this game the Queen excels her royal spouse. As a matter of fact polo is more to the King's taste and to La Granja he always takes the best of his string of

forty polo ponies. Here it may be truly said the King and Queen are idyllically happy. Free from the ceremony of political and social circles they are the boy and girl sweethearts once more. They go through country lanes hand in hand and follow woodland paths unescorted. As La Granja was their haven of quiet after their turbulent wedding day, so has it since been their harbour of peace and happiness away from the harassing cares of sovereignty.

Queen Victoria Eugenie had been only a few days in the country which was henceforth to be her own, when she had made great progress in the winning of the nation. Her sympathy for the condemned man, her poise and self-command in the face of shock and danger had all a tremendous influence in prejudicing people in her favour. If possible, a yet more difficult task now confronted her; for she faced the daily scrutiny of court and people.

One of the earliest duties which she had to perform was to attend a bull fight. The Spanish people could never give absolute allegiance to a sovereign who did not in some measure share their joy and enthusiasm in this national and tradition-honoured sport. So to a bull fight went the Queen. Simple English girl that she was, with fine sensibilities and delicate feelings, we can well appreciate her horror at it all. When the moment had arrived for the signal to be given from the Royal Box for the fight to begin all eyes were turned ex-

pectantly toward the King, but it was the young Queen who fluttered the white scarf. When the crowd saw this, they rose like one man, frantically cheering their Queen. It was distinctly a popular thing to do.

Ordinarily, six bulls are despatched at a single fight, but before death, each bull generally kills one to three horses besides horribly goring others and sometimes injuring one or more of the men. That a bull fight is not a pleasant thing to watch, I know, for I have seen several. At one which I attended on the Day of Ascension (bull fights are always held on Sundays and religious fête days) the killing of the six bulls was accompanied by the outright killing of eleven horses and the maiming of four others, while one man was tossed high in the air by a bull and two others hurt by their horses falling on them. The fourteen thousand spectators were delirious with delight and called it "a good bull fight."

The young Queen remained in the Royal Box throughout the *correda* and thus concluded her initiation into Queenship.

The year following the marriage sped to a happy close. The Queen grew increasingly popular. As the months went on, the shock of the wedding day drifted into a hideous memory, and the hearty enthusiasm of the Spanish people melted the somewhat austere bearing which was native to her and she began to return the cordial greetings of the people everywhere she went. Nowhere on earth

THE PROCESSION OF BULL FIGHTERS.

—not even in France—are beautiful women more appreciated than in Spain, and Queen Victoria is lovely to look upon. She is tall and of majestic bearing. She has an abundance of golden hair which she wears in long rich braids wound about the back of her head and generally loosely dressed in front. She has eyes of a singularly clear blue and quite as sharp and twinkling as are the King's snapping brown eyes,—and his are famous.

"Such exquisite colouring!" is an exclamation frequently heard concerning her. At nineteen she combined all the freshness of youth with the dignity of maturity, and to-day, though she is three times a mother, she retains the high colour characteristic of English women, and set against a clear white skin. The first time I saw her close, her cheeks reminded me of charming porcelain —if it were not trite, I would say a bit of Dresden.

With all her instinctive charm she has a genius for dressing well. In this, again, she easily and naturally excels her sister Queens.

When first she went to San Sebastian, the fashionable mid-summer watering resort of Spain on the west coast near the northern border, she appeared like a modern Gainsborough duchess. Her stylishly cut gowns worn with grace and perfect naturalness were offset by great hats which were much in vogue at that time and which resemble the picturesque Gainsboroughs. She is a woman who can carry any amount of tasteful dressing,

but her own preference seems to be toward simplicity.

A more elegant woman one rarely sees anywhere in the world. The eye of the Spanish people, quick and sensitive to taste and beauty instantly caught all these details, and even if her nature, disposition and character were not as they are, she would still be idolised for her beauty alone.

At Seville, in the south of Spain, where beauty is worshipped even more than in the north the people went mad over her on her very first ride through the streets—from the railroad station to the Alcazar, as the ancient Moorish palace there is called. Throughout southern Spain—Andalusia—there is a Moorish strain noticeable in the people. The women are of the swarthy type, with large lustrous eyes, hair of ebony, and deep passionate natures that one senses almost tangibly. As with most people of this type and character, the opposite type makes a tremendous appeal to them. The golden beauty of the fair young Queen took Seville by storm. To this day, and probably for all time, she is and will be known in the south as the "Idol of Andalusia."

One small detail which pleased the Andalusian people greatly was her donning the *mantilla* on appropriate occasions. The *mantilla* is a lace scarf, sometimes white and sometimes black, which is worn over the head by women in place of a hat. Any lace scarf, however, is not a *mantilla,* and there are certain precise ways of wearing this typi-

cally Spanish headdress. To be exact, there are thirteen different ways of adjusting it, each way adapted to a particular occasion. For example, the Sevillano will wear a black *mantilla* low over her head at a funeral, and a white *mantilla* high over her head,—the elevation being accomplished by the aid of a huge amber comb,—at a bull fight or in a slightly different arrangement for a wedding. The art of adjusting the *mantilla* is almost as difficult to acquire as the use of castanets or some of the Andalusian dance steps. It is seldom that one not of Spanish blood can wear a *mantilla* becomingly at all, but on Queen Victoria Eugenie it looks quite natural. A peculiar thing about Andalusian women is that they are so altogether charming in the *mantilla* that not one in a thousand can wear any kind of a dress hat, even one strictly *à la mode* and direct from Paris. The women of Southern Spain and the *mantilla* seem peculiarly adapted to go together. The cost of a *mantilla* by the way is as much as of the most fashionable Paris hats. Ordinary ones frequently cost from thirty to fifty dollars, and specially good ones as much as one hundred dollars.

In Seville Queen Victoria Eugenie was as quick to catch the warmth of spirit as the Sevillanos were to appreciate her beauty and now, after five years she looks forward to her annual visit to the ancient Moorish city as to no other city in the kingdom.

A custom which prevails in Andalusia and which nearly always results in extreme embarrassment to

foreign ladies, is the passing of remarks out loud by passers-by, of a wholly personal nature. When an Andalusian sees a beautiful woman he is filled with joy and gladness and he wants her to know the pleasure she has given him by the flash of her eye or the loveliness of her face or form—so he spontaneously exclaims: "What beauty!" "How sympathetic." "Those eyes!" "Such hair!" or whatnot. The women of that country, from the lowliest right up to the wives of the most exclusive grandees, expect this appreciation and miss it when they fail to catch what strangers may say of them.

Queen Victoria had had this all explained to her so that she was prepared for direct remarks of this nature. Once she laughed outright as an enthusiastic Andalusian cried out: "You are not only Queen of Spain; you are the Queen of Beautiful Women."

In her visits to Seville, the Queen is ever and always reminded of her dearly beloved father, for the one letter which she had from him was written from Seville, the letter in which he had told her that one day she would come to this lovely land and be very happy. This is a happy memory, despite the tinge of sadness, and in Seville, she says she is always most happy.

CHAPTER VII

DON ALFONSO XIII

WHAT manner of man is the young King whom the Island Princess married?

Don Alfonso XIII is unique among the kings of the earth, inasmuch as he was practically born a king. His father, Alfonso XII, died five months before he was born. The widowed Queen, his mother, became the Regent of the Throne, but the little Alfonso XIII knew, from the time he knew anything, that he was a ruler already, where most kings have spent years of preparation for kingship while heirs-apparent.

He was born May 17, 1886. He received the tenderest care and attention from his mother; her favourite pet name for him while he was a baby was "Puby." From the time of his birth he appeared delicate, which occasioned the greatest solicitude for his physical well-being.

He has always manifested the greatest love for his mother. From earliest childhood he entertained for her a supreme regard and affection, and frequently when he was inclined to be headstrong and oppose the wishes of his governesses the Queen Regent—as she was called until Alfonso reached the age of sixteen—would be called to

make him obey. Her methods were all her own, her coercion only that of love.

One winter morning Alfonso was reluctant to take his usual cold bath and stubbornly remained in bed. His nurses made appeal after appeal to him, but his Majesty remained obdurate. Finally, in despair, the nurse went to his mother the Queen Regent.

"You must take your bath, Baby," said the Queen, coming to his bedside.

The baby king gave no answer.

"If I tell you to do it, you will—won't you?"

Again no response.

"Very well, then," continued the Queen, "I will not ask you again, but I shall go to my room and cry because you will not obey me. Do you wish that?"

"No, no, mamma," cried the young Alfonso, and flinging aside the bed clothes he sprang from the bed and took his cold plunge.

King Alfonso was brought up in this atmosphere of love and affection and it is doubtless owing to this that his own nature is so warm and lovable to-day.

When he was four years old, he fell very ill. His anxious mother watched constantly by his bedside. One day, he turned his little face toward where she was sitting and said: "Are you not very tired, mother mine? Do you love me so very much? Do go to bed. You must be so tired. I think I ought to send you away."

Not until he was seven years of age did he begin any regular course of studies and then he began with only one hour a day. In a short time, however, he had learned to read and write easily. Much of his boyhood was spent at the beautiful Miramar palace. After he had learned to read and write, the study of geography and history came next and a little later French and Latin. From all accounts, the boy Alfonso was quite as full of mischief and capers as are most small boys.

One of his Chamberlains relates the story that, when he was eight years old, streams of water were one day seen running down the corridor from the bathroom of the Royal Palace. The door of the apartment was securely fastened and the little fellow refused admission to any one until finally the Queen herself was sent for, and, when she demanded admittance, found her Royal son enjoying what he called "A Naval Battle in High Seas," the ships being logs which he had collected from various wood baskets and his high seas, the overflowing bathtub.

Queen Cristina found Alfonso a little backward in acquiring German, and as none of the text-books then used in Spain seemed adapted to his use, she went to the trouble of preparing a grammar for him, which enabled him to become familiar with the rules of the language in a simple and amusing form. Alfonso has always been of an inquiring turn of mind, and the interest he has recently displayed in aeroplanes and automobiles

is the natural outcome of the interest he displayed in all mechanics when a mere boy.

Mr. Frederic Courtland Penfield has related as one of his experiences in Spain the breaking down of his motor car near La Granja which necessitated sending to Madrid for new parts to replace the damaged mechanism. While the men were at work upon the machine, the King happened along, and, not content with watching the progress of the repairs, he proceeded to direct the men himself, getting down under the car and examining minutely each of its parts and aiding the men by constant suggestion. He took apparently all the interest in the work of a boy who has removed the back of his first watch to see the wheels go round. Not until the car was ready to proceed did the King leave the spot.

As a matter of fact, Don Alfonso is the most ardent motorist in Spain and the most skilful if not the most reckless driver. He has several 70 h. p. machines and when he drives these machines in the country, he sometimes goes at the rate of seventy-five and eighty miles an hour. During the Spring months, when the court is at La Granja, the King comes to Madrid several times a week. The distance is ninety kilometres and he allows one hour and a quarter for the journey. The road lies right across the Guadarrama mountains which rise to a height of six thousand feet. The ascent and descent of these mountains is tremendously steep, being made by a series of loops like the

roads which cross the Alps in Switzerland. Only the most skilled chauffeurs can go over this road at even a moderate rate of speed, but the King goes all the way at high speed, averaging for the entire distance nearly a mile a minute.

CHAPTER VIII

A KING'S LIFE

AMAZING few are the people outside his kingdom who do not know him who appreciate the unusual personality of this precocious young king. Indeed, he must be known to be appreciated.

A tall, athletic young man of narrow but muscular physique, with a smooth, olive skin, dartling black-brown eyes and a kaleidoscopic expression, —Don Alfonso is one to command attention, interest and respect. He sits a horse superbly. He excels in everything he undertakes. He is the surest shot in Spain; the most skilful as well as the most reckless motorist, a capable yachtsman, an efficient, dependable polo-player,—above all he has infinite pluck and daring. The world is familiar with his courage not only at the time of the bomb on his wedding day but on many other occasions when he has displayed iron nerve and superb poise. The first time I had a formal audience with His Majesty, I gathered my real impressions of the man. After this audience, I saw him many times and under varied circumstances, but always the impressions of the first day were deepened and confirmed. As I entered his study in the palace of Madrid, he came with quick, nervous step toward

me and grasping me firmly by the hand, spoke words of greeting in the Spanish language.

"Your Majesty has no objection to English?" I asked, as he still tightly held my hand.

"Objection? Rather not, provided you can stand for my wretched English." This was the only note of affectation in King Alfonso's entire conversation. He speaks English fluently, correctly and idiomatically.

"Put aside your hat and gloves and sit down. Let us talk," he continued. I placed my hat aside as he bade me and started to seat myself opposite the chair His Majesty had already taken.

"Not there, not so far away," he exclaimed. "Come here," and he patted with the palm of his hand the sofa which was in juxtaposition to his chair.

"Have a cigarette," he added, as I moved close to him and he held out a silver cigarette case with a small monogram in the upper left hand corner.

"May I smoke?" I queried, I must confess, in some surprise.

"Naturally, why not? Here"—and before I had fairly taken the cigarette, His Majesty, with characteristic quickness had struck a wax vesta and was holding it toward my mouth that I might get my light.

My slow wits happily returned in time for me to catch the match from the Royal fingers, to offer it first to him and then light my own. These were the preliminaries. They were over in a

minute. After we had lighted our cigarettes, he leaned forward, his elbows resting on his knees and the joints of his fingers closed against each other before him. He spoke rapidly but thoughtfully, and in his voice was the ring of a man of enthusiasms.

Beneath the smooth, olive skin and the flashing black eyes, one *felt* a strong, passionate nature. One got instantly behind the glamour of royalty and saw only the man, the man of conviction and of courage,—the man of Destiny.

No photograph has ever portrayed King Alfonso. He is unphotographable. The man is not in his features but in his expressions, his manners, his atmosphere of charming manliness; above all in the scintillating glints of his flashing eyes.

"You have come at a very interesting moment in our history," he said, "because it is a moment of change for Spain. We are just recovering from our long era of costly wars, ending with the disastrous war with America, and our recent colonial wars." He paused and smiled genially as he added, "In the war with America, we were badly beaten, but that is a matter which has now passed into history and that page of our history we have turned over. I think I can speak for everyone in Spain when I say that not the slightest feeling of rancour remains with us; and I have ample evidence that the American people have none but the best of wishes for Spain." I replied that many Americans were ready to congratulate Spain in being well rid

of Cuba and the Philippines, those frightfully expensive drains on the resources of Spain—which are proving a by no means light drain upon the resources of America.

His Majesty's eyes twinkled merrily as he looked directly into my face. After a brief pause, he went on: "However that may be, a new era for Spain began with the close of the war. The recent war in Africa cost us heavily—fifty-three million pesetas ($10,600,000)."

"Surely that is not much as the cost of wars go nowadays," I interrupted.

"No, quite true—for a modern war, it was not so expensive," he returned, "especially in view of the results we have obtained."

Then he sketched the present lines of Spanish influence in Morocco and outlined the policy of Spain for the development of this influence and the increase of trade. Incidentally, he paid a high tribute to the courage and marksmanship of the Moors. "They don't fire till they see the whites of the eyes of the approaching troops and they pick the officers first of all with amazing accuracy."

"That war being now over," he went on, "we have entered a period of peace and it is my aim to further the development of Spain in every way possible. It would be interesting to realise all that we have already begun, what we are about to do and what we hope to do in the next years before us."

I lighted another cigarette and the King, without shifting his position, began afresh.

"First of all, we are giving our attention to each branch of the State separately. I have my ambitions for the army, the reëstablishment of the navy, the general education of the people and how we hope to deal with other internal problems, the Republicans, the Socialists, the Anarchists and others."

During the last decade I have listened to statesmen and leaders of men in almost every country of Europe and in America, but I have never met any man who could say as much in an hour as did King Alfonso; I have never met a politician or statesman who was so intimately familiar with small details, and I have never met anyone who could talk so succinctly to the point. He elucidated each question with graphic clearness. Each subject that he took up in turn, he summarised. As a feat of intellectual conversation, it was without parallel so far as my experience extends. He expressed himself very rapidly, in clear, incisive language, showing toward each topic an enthusiasm and personal interest almost incredible. At the same time, he watched my expression carefully and at the least shadow of question which I betrayed, he delved deeper into details in order to make everything perfectly clear. I touched upon the question of the Church in Spain and found His Majesty's views as liberal and as clear as they were upon the secular subjects. He went on, however,

to explain that any hasty reform was impractical, although it was the project of his government to undertake all of them as circumstances would permit. If he were to introduce liberal and progressive measures at once, the opposition would throw the whole country into a turmoil.

Politically, the attitude of the King is for all that makes for the common weal of Spain in the platforms of all parties and movements—even those that are opposed to his monarchy.

The amazing development of Spain during the last decade is directly due to the extraordinary dynamic spirit which has been exhibited by this remarkable young King. No department of national life has been neglected by him.

The Iberian peninsula has long been regarded as a doubtful, not to say dangerous proposition from a financial standpoint. Spain and Portugal have been judged more or less alike. No greater mistake could ever have been made. Portugal has long been in the hands of aristocratic buccaneers, pirates in broadcloth, but none the less rascals of a most desperate character. The Portugal Ship of State was looted and scuttled by the very class who constituted her monarchy. Nowhere could one find a dominant personality.

Spain on the other hand is well equipped with statesmen, with diplomats, with politicians of large calibre and more so now than in any decade of recent centuries and all because of the personal attention given to the affairs of state by King Al-

fonso. Don Alfonso is the hero and the idol of the whole Spanish army. From earliest boyhood, he devoted a large part of his time to building and strengthening the army and increasing its *esprit de corps*. Two forenoons of every week, he devotes to military audiences. He never tires of reviewing troops, often leaving the palace at six o'clock in the morning to visit some outlying garrison. When he is caught overnight in some remote town, he is sure to be up early the next morning to inspect any body of troops which may be quartered in the neighbourhood. I recall once seeing the King overtake a body of infantry in the street called Arenal, in Madrid. As soon as the royal automobile came up even with the rear rank, the order was given to the troops to have them swing round so as to face the sovereign in salute as he went past. The King at once rose to his feet in the car, at the same time uncovering, and as the car swept by the regiment, his piercing, intelligent eyes seemed to dart an individual glance to each soldier along the entire line. Not once did his eyes wander from the troops, although a hurrahing crowd blocked the pavement on the other side of the street. Ask any soldiers of the Mellila campaign who wore the cool sun helmets that the King presented from his private purse, speak the name of the King to any officer of the Spanish army and see him square his shoulders.

King Alfonso does not trust entirely to military supremacy, however, for he believes in the peace-

KING ALFONSO AND HIS HEIR.

ful progression of his country and appreciates to the full the necessity of economic development. At the time of the Spanish-American war when Cuba and the Philippines were lost to Spain, it seemed as if her greatest markets had been taken from her, but during recent years, since Don Alfonso has extensively taken up the reins of sovereignty, he has stimulated commerce and trade in other parts of the world. Spain has seaports which give her splendid natural commercial advantages. A few years since, Spain went quietly but earnestly to work to build up an exchange trade with the new countries of the world which seemed to offer the greatest opportunity for large commercial expansion,—trade with the Argentine Republic, Paraguay, Brazil, Chili, Peru and Mexico. During the last few years, under the wise counsel of the King, these states have been courted diplomatically and socially to the incalculable stimulus of trade; and with what result? In ten years, Spanish bonds have doubled in value. Spain now sends $12,000,000 worth of textiles, minerals and wines to the Argentine while only six years ago, 1905, the amount was only $6,000,000. In Uruguay, almost a proportionate increase has been witnessed since 1905 when $9,000,000 worth of exports went from Spain and it is probable that within the near future, Spain will be sending $20,000,000 worth of stuffs to Uruguay alone.

Spain's trade with Mexico has been particularly happy because the credit system is practically

non-existent. Of $7,000,000 worth of goods shipped to Mexico in one recent year, 90 per cent. was paid for in cash. To the United States, Spain sends annually approximately $8,000,000 worth of minerals, cork, olives, Malaga grapes, etc., and in return purchases from us nearly $30,000,000 worth of goods. Raw cotton is the chief import from the United States, but modern machinery forms a big item. Spain, however, buys most of her goods from Great Britain and the amount shipped annually to the Iberian Kingdom averages $80,000,000. This is the result of long years of trade study, nursed and built up and consequently it is less significant than the trade with South America which has received such extraordinary stimulus, not in ten but in five years, or in other words, since King Alfonso has been personally concerned with this phase of the development of his kingdom. Spain is a country in which the people went in a single bound from petroleum to electricity and this is indicative of her entire development. She is rapidly skipping through the gas stage of progress through which the rest of the world has so long toiled.

The keynote of King Alfonso's character is in his courageous determination. Once convinced of what is right, I believe he would be as steadfast as the rugged crags of the Pyrenees, that he could be swayed by neither favourites nor ministers, threats nor prayers.

The sense of duty has been highly developed in

him, thanks to the careful training he received at the hands of Queen Maria Cristina, and his sense of moral obligation is absolute.

The general idea of the King is to encourage the industrial and economic development of the country, at the same time he is upholding the state, and to strengthen at every point the bulwarks of the state until its whole fibre is of the strongest character. Commercial development without a thoroughly grounded state, he believes to be worthless.

Don Alfonso XIII believes in Spain. He glories in her proud past and he has the conviction that greater glories and prosperity are still awaiting her. It is toward her greater future that he is ever looking, and with that greater future in view, so he is building. He wants the world to know Spain. He wants tourists from every country to come and see her natural beauties, her resources and her possibilities. To stimulate interest abroad he is now giving special attention to the seemingly trivial, but after all most important matter, namely, better roads throughout the Kingdom and improved hotels. Till now, many of the roads of Spain are utterly wretched. When Spain can vie with France in her road beds, the Sovereign believes that many more tourists will come, especially in view of the increasing use of automobiles. And having come to the country he wants people made comfortable.

There are, at this time, but few first-class hotels in Spain. There is one at Granada,

built by the Duke of San Pedro, and others at Algiciras and Ronda. The hotels of Madrid are all rather bad and excessively expensive. The prices are paramount to the best hotels of London and Paris and the rooms are small, poorly equipped and in general comfort are decidedly lacking. The King manifested his interest to the extent of asking me many minute details about the hotel where I was lodged, the size of my room, number of windows, was there running water (which there was not), the kind of bed, etc., etc. He knew quite well, however, the actual conditions before he asked the questions. A new Ritz-Carlton was therefore built in Madrid through the personal interest and influence of the King, and it is the aim of His Majesty to make this the first of a chain of good hotels all over Spain. This practical interest in details of this character indicates that he is no mere dreamer of empires, no idealist who lives in the future because he is looking forward. Like all strong men of history, King Alfonso is a practical idealist who gives heed to each step of the road he is travelling, conscious that on the work of to-day the work of to-morrow must stand.

History will ultimately place him, but at twenty-four he has already taken his place among the signal figures of his time and his promise for the future is immeasurable.

An estimate of King Alfonso's statecraft at so

early a period is not possible. But there is great promise in the young sovereign. Don Alfonso does everything that he undertakes. It is a bred-in-the-bone characteristic with him to excel in all things.

King Alfonso, like King George in England, is one of the best shots in his kingdom. This, at least, is a matter of merit, and cannot be said as a courtesy to the King. This year, King Alfonso came out second best at the annual pigeon shoot, having taken nineteen birds out of twenty-one. The high record was twenty-one out of twenty-three. Previous years, the King has captured the first prize.

The English Princess who became a Spanish Queen, therefore, came to a land of extraordinary activity. Spain's development is proceeding with greater rapidity than in any other country in Europe during the present decade. King Alfonso is the most wideawake, alert, progressive man in Spain and he is controlled by a tremendous ambition to bring Spain into line with the most modern of nations. He is kept well informed as to what all parties in his kingdom are doing—what they want and why they want it. He is as quick to accept a plank from the platform of the Republicans or Socialists as from the Liberals or Monarchists. By nature, Don Alfonso is a radical. It is by virtue of his personality and what he has accomplished for Spain that he is the most popular man

in his Kingdom. Republicans to whom I have put the question: "If a Republic were declared in Spain, who would be the first national leader—the first president?" The answer has been "probably Don Alfonso. He is the most popular man in the country."

CHAPTER IX

COURAGE AND KINGSHIP

ONE afternoon, shortly after the audience already referred to, I was crossing the Plaza de Oriente in Madrid, towards the Royal Palace. An automobile came whirling up from the Casa de Campo and as it passed, a hand waved through the window. It was the spontaneous action of a man aglow with youth and energy. Just beyond, the car stopped, the door opened, and the King jumped out. I was so surprised I even forgot to throw away the cigar I was smoking. In the friendliest and most natural way possible, His Majesty shook my hand and told me that at five o'clock they were going to play polo for the Queen's cup at the Casa de Campo grounds and if I cared to go along, to find one of the Palace secretaries and tell him to order a carriage for me from the royal mews.

It did not take long to find Don Pablo Churruca, who promptly procured the carriage and we drove together through the lovely gardens of the Royal Park, arranged by the Queen Maria Cristina, to the polo field. These polo grounds are some three or four miles from the Palace, and command an imposing panorama of Guadarrama

mountains which, owing to their considerable height, are snow-capped until late June. The polo field was laid out by the Marquis of Viana, the King's bosom friend and his Master of the Horse. The Marquis is prouder of this polo field than almost anything else in the world, and with reason. It is a magnificent greensward, kept in perfect condition. Here the King comes to play three times a week during the stay of the Court in Madrid.

Don Alfonso looks upon his regular daily exercise as much as a part of his kingly duties as signing documents or reviewing troops. He is the only polo-playing sovereign in the world, and in this, as in everything else, he is an enthusiast.

That day, he had a string of seventeen ponies in charge of eleven grooms on hand for frequent changes. At the royal mews, he has more than double this number, most of them at present coming from the Argentine Republic.

King Alfonso is at his best in the saddle. He rides like a born horseman and nowhere,—not even in military uniform,—does he appear to better advantage than at polo. His reckless energy and boundless spirit are ever to the fore. When he starts after the ball, he goes full tilt, showing no consideration, asking none. As the riders sweep up and down and across the field, the King is ever in the thickest of the game, riding hard, driving hard and holding his own with the strongest and best. During the succeeding weeks I went many times to the Polo games.

At the close of the game each day, His Majesty would walk across the field to ask the few invited guests present to join the players for tea which is served in a spacious tent erected near to the club châlet. The usual players whom I saw there were the Duke of Alba, the Marquis of Viana, the Marquis of Santo Domingo, Count de la Cimera, Count de la Maza and Mr. Marshal, an English professional. Besides these players there were usually three or four other gentlemen and half a dozen ladies.

After the game, the King would come strolling across the grounds in his riding togs, a loose coat on, but unbuttoned, a grey soft hat carelessly balanced on the back of his head. As he approached, the gentlemen would uncover as would His Majesty, and in turn he would greet each one. As he shook hands with the ladies, each in turn would do a fascinating curtsey. Then all would repair into the tent—and the rest was like afternoon tea in any English country house. And incidentally, English is the language most used by all the company. The King and several of the players use English almost precisely as their mother tongue.

The fearlessness of Don Alfonso at polo is typical of his whole life. He is a fatalist. His spirit is as much endless courage as an absolute lack of the knowledge of fear. I doubt if he has any conception of the nature or quality of that emotion.

Now that the lamented King Edward is gone,

it will perhaps be no indiscretion to make public an incident in connection with King Alfonso's going to Barcelona when that city was believed to be on the eve of a revolution. "I am needed there," said Don Alfonso. Despite the entreaties of the entire court, he planned to go. Just before the day he was to start from the capital, King Edward summoned one of the Spanish Embassy in London. He said that he had not slept the entire night through worry about King Alfonso's going to Barcelona. He begged that a message be immediately sent to Madrid beseeching Alfonso to abandon the trip. Don Alfonso acknowledged the message. But, he proceeded to Barcelona. The results of the trip vindicated the young King's wisdom. The long and short of it is, King Alfonso is a man, a man to be trusted in a tight place. His theory is, "If they set out to kill me, they will get me anyway, so in the meantime, why bother my head about it?" This allegiance to duty is with him a passion, a veritable religion in the highest sense.

Take the regular routine of the King's day. He rises early—from seven to seven-thirty; some mornings when he reviews troops, he leaves the Palace at six. He is occupied with his correspondence and state papers until ten when he receives the Prime Minister and one other minister. The Premier reports every morning and the other members of the Council are received every day in turn. Then come the regular audiences which occupy him until one-thirty or two, when he takes lunch-

eon. In the afternoon, he does whatever chores may come up,—the opening of a bazaar or exhibition, or any of the endless calls which are made upon the sovereign. At four, he has tea with the Queen and then goes to polo or pigeon shooting or takes his regular exercise, whatever it may be for the day. Upon his return, there are sometimes further audiences, and always before dressing for dinner, he peruses the day's cuttings from the newspapers of the world. Forty-six daily newspapers come regularly to the Palace. Each afternoon, the King's private secretaries (there are five of them in all, appointed from the diplomatic corps) glean from these every item of news likely to be of interest to the sovereign. Nothing is skipped, criticism and unkindly comment go in with all the rest. These clippings are pasted on sheets of paper which are bound together with a red and yellow cord and left on His Majesty's table.

At eight-thirty he dines. Week day evenings, the King goes to whatever social functions he has to attend. King Alfonso appreciates his social duties as a sovereign quite as much as his duties of state.

Coming down the main stairway of a house in Madrid after a dance at five o'clock in the morning once he met one of his secretaries. "You lucky beggar," he exclaimed, "you need not get out of your bed before three in the afternoon, while I must be up to receive my ministers as usual!" One of the great reasons for the popular-

ity of King Alfonso is his attention to social affairs. He enters into these functions with the same zest that he does everything else and he is seldom accused of putting a damper on an occasion by leaving too early.

The great fact concerning Don Alfonso that appeals to me is his extreme humanness. He is ever and always on the spot. In his movements, he is as quick as lightning and his mind is extraordinarily alert. Disciplined to the very highest pitch of efficiency, he is an all round able man, and would be so considered in any walk of life. He is never too busy to attend to the last, smallest detail concerning any matter in his Kingdom.

One day he said to me, "Anything that you want in Spain, or about Spain, don't go anywhere else —let me know directly."

Whether he is presiding over his Council of Ministers or amiably and gracefully performing some ceremony incident to the duties of sovereignty or receiving in audience, or playing polo with his own chosen companions, or driving his great 70 h.p. car across country at reckless speed, or taking tea with the Queen, he is always at once the same blithe spirit, the spontaneous youth and the earnest man of affairs. In uniform, he looks a born soldier. At polo, he appears like a man who lives for sport. In ordinary attire, he is the dapper young blood of any capital city, sleek, well-groomed, immaculate. His face is as elusive as a kaleidoscope, changing each second. Smiles and

laughter play around his mouth and eyes but underneath the surface one instinctively feels the intense, thoughtful nature of an inspired leader of men.

These glimpses of the man—Alfonso,—his character, temperament and personality, may enable us to picture the environment of the English Princess, whose early life was spent in the tranquil atmosphere of the Isle of Wight and the favourite Scottish home of Queen Victoria of England. From the moment of her entrance into Spain, she has lived amid strenuous scenes, and in an atmosphere as different from her native land as anything could be. Yet she has risen to it all like the born Queen she is. That the lurking dangers which so often apprise her royal spouse, sorely try her spirit and sometimes wear her nerves is not to be wondered at. That she exercises the control she does is the cause of our admiration.

Not since the year 1170 had an English Queen been called to the throne of Spain. In that year, Alfonso VIII, wooed and won the English Eleanor, who, as Queen, distinguished herself as a patroness of scholarship and learning, largely supporting by contribution, the University of Palencia. It is the belief and hope of Spain, that Queen Victoria will carry into Spain English traditions along this line and during the years of her reign materially raise the educational standard of the whole people. Certain it is that any work which she at-

tempts will be heartily encouraged by her royal spouse.

Queenship carries with it myriad duties,—not merely the duties of sovereign, official or political as the case may be, but first and foremost, the duties of motherhood, the duties of bearing and rearing kings and queens to be. For this high office, Queen Victoria was soon to demonstrate her aptitude and the best part of her romance lies in the story of the royal princes of Spain which have blessed the marriage during the first four years.

CHAPTER X

THE PRINCE OF ASTURIAS

ONE year to a month after the Royal marriage Spain's happiness and satisfaction in the new Queen were made complete by the birth of an heir to the throne. The official title of the newcomer, as heir apparent, is Prince of Asturias, and as such he is always spoken of, but in addition, he has a string of names almost as long as his Royal father's string of polo ponies. He is now three years of age and accomplished in many things, but he cannot yet repeat his full name! Indeed, it seems probable that he will be considerably older before he can memorise them all in proper sequence. Fancy this wee boy learning to write: Alfonso Pius Christian Edward Francis William Charles Henry Eugene Ferdinand Anthony Venancio, Prince of Asturias, heir to the thrones of Spain, Castile, Leon, Aragon, the Two Sicillies, Jerusalem, Navarre, Granada, Toledo, Valencia, Galicia, Majolica, Minorca, Seville, Sardinia, Cordova, Corsica, Murcie, Jean, Algarne, Algeciras, Gibraltar, the Canary Islands, the Oriental and Occidental Indies; Archdukedom of Austria, dukedoms of Burgundy, Brabant and Milan; Count of Hapsburg, Flanders, the Tyrol and Barcelona; Seigneur of Biscay and Molina!

This is official. Doubters may turn to the almanach de Gotha, page 34, and read in verification.

The joy not only of the Royal Family but of the whole Spanish people may be conceived at the birth of this child, for this is the first son born to a reigning King in Spain in four generations.

With these numerous names and appendages it is not surprising to find Queen Victoria's first born ushered into the world with considerable ceremony.

In olden days changeling children were sometimes foisted upon a nation, and in certain historical instances such imposed children have succeeded to thrones and held sway while the *camarilla* which perpetrated the trick have fattened and grown rich. To thwart these daring humbugs laws were enacted in many countries to the effect that the birth of a Royal child, especially an heir, must be in the presence of a certain number of responsible dignitaries of the Court. Spain still technically holds that the Prime Minister must be present, and according to tradition all of the ministers, grandees and foreign ambassadors and ministers present in the city shall be summoned to the Palace. The King then marches through the room into which these numerous privileged ones have been gathered bearing the Royal child on a silver salver.

The exuberant happiness of King Alfonso may be surmised from the report of all present on the memorable occasion that as the proud father passed through the chamber, his face transformed into

one great smile, he could only say: "He weighs four kilos! He weighs four kilos!"

One week later the baby Prince was baptised in the chapel of the Royal Palace, the Bishop of Toledo, Primate of Spain, officiating. Be it said that his serene Highness was quite on his dignity on this his first public appearance. Only once did he jeopardise the quiet of the solemn occasion and that at the font when he made known his presence by one long, loud baby shriek—which afforded as much amusement to his father the King, as it did embarrassment to the most reverend Prelate.

This ceremony was in ample keeping with all the traditions of this most ceremonious of courts. Vienna and St. Petersburg alone of all the capitals of Europe are more punctilious than Madrid in the observance of traditional functions. For Madrid and the Spanish Court be it said, however, that these ceremonies are observed in an amiable and happy fashion which is possible only in a country where grace and charm and warmth of nature are characteristic of the temper and temperament of the people.

On this occasion the chapel in the Royal Palace in Madrid was occupied to its utmost capacity, chiefly by the grandees of Spain, visiting royalties, and the ambassadors and ministers of foreign countries.

The wonderful tapestries which are one of the proudest art possessions of Spain and which are only displayed on very special occasions were

brought out to line the walls, while the Halberdier Guards who lined the aisles added colour to the setting. The ladies present all wore *mantillas* while the men were in full uniform or evening dress. The Christening procession was one of glittering and imposing magnificence.

First came the mace-bearers followed by the ushers in double file, then two long lines of Chamberlains in gold-laced coats and white silk stockings, after them the grandees of Spain in their striking military uniforms and feathered cocked hats. Then came seven specially picked grandees carrying seven salvers on which were such requisites for the holy ceremony as a salt-cellar, a gold basin and ewer, a cut lemon, a lace towel, a cape, and a large cake. Behind this party came the royal Prince himself, ensconced in rare and beautiful laces. His fair little uncovered head and tiny face, and his clenched fists were the admiration of all beholders. He was in the arms of the Marquesa de los Llanos, who is the chief of his retinue, and on one side walked the Papal Nuncio, who is the representative of His Holiness, the Pope, as godfather, and on the other was the Queen-mother, as the godmother. The King strode behind. The Infantes and Infantas followed, with their suites. The Infanta Maria Teresa, sister of the King, and her husband, Infante Fernando, being only convalescent from measles, were unable to be present. Don Carlos, the widowed husband of the King's late sister, the Infanta Mercedes, led little Prince

THE PRINCE OF ASTURIAS.

Alfonso, who was known as the heir to the throne until the birth of his little cousin.

The little sister of the ex-heir was led by the hand by the Infanta Isabel, at whose side walked Princess Henry of Battenberg, beautifully robed in grey velvet and ermine. Prince Arthur of Connaught, with Captain Wyndham and the Princes from Russia and Germany, and other Royal representatives, all had their places in the procession. China was also represented. The personal staff of the King was conspicuous, and the halberdier band of music marshalled the glittering throng to the chapel.

The altar was decorated with white flowers. The historic font in which the members of the Royal Family have for centuries been baptised was in the centre of the chapel.

Thirty-six Bishops and four Cardinals officiated. The Royal child was carried in the arms of his grandmother, the Dowager Queen Maria Cristina. The water sprinkled on his brow was from the River Jordan. The christening ceremony over, the King decorated his infant son with the Order of the Golden Fleece, the Order of Isabella the Catholic, and the Collar of Charles III. All the ladies of the Court were in full dress.

The little Prince thrived as a baby, and he was a sturdy chap of almost three when I went to Spain to write this story. In Madrid, I found him already a feature of the capital. Each day, when it was nearing the time for him and his little brother

and sister (who have since arrived) to go for their afternoon drive, a great crowd would collect before the Palace gates to catch a fleeting glimpse of him who will (D. V.) one day reign over them.

On his first birthday, the Prince of Asturias was formally enrolled as a member of one of the crack royal regiments in his father's kingdom. The regimental register for that day describes the new recruit as "resident in the province of Madrid: age one year; and a *bachelor!*" It was the day before his third birthday that I first saw him. He had profited by his military connection during these two years, for he had learned to salute as properly as any soldier, to wear a uniform, and to play with soldier toys. Incidentally, he was still a bachelor.

This early martial association is a custom common to kings and princes. Not infrequently, heirs apparent are made honorary commanders of regiments before they reach the age of five, and all through boyhood a military uniform is the favourite costume of many of them. King Alfonso nearly always wore a military uniform during his childhood and youth—but Don Alfonso has never been other than a King. A nation was already his at birth, an army, a navy and more palaces than he could ever know what to do with.

From the day the Prince of Asturias became a member of his regiment, a bed was set aside and will always be reserved for him in the regimental barracks, and the regulation plate, mug and spoon

of his equipment kept ready for his use. An incident of that memorable first birthday of the little Prince which must have bored the young man intensely was the reading to him of the penal laws in order that thereafter he might not be able to justify any infraction of discipline by maintaining his ignorance of these laws. The papers which he was obliged to sign were marked with an "X" signifying "The Prince of Asturias, his mark."

One day, when I was in the Palace in Madrid, the little Prince was discovered in one of the chambers of the private apartments, playing with the sword of one of his father's aides. My companion looked at the little fellow and the sword which was bigger than he, and said: "What does your Royal Highness propose to do with that sword?" The Prince paused in his play and after a moment's hesitation replied: "Have no fear, no harm shall come to you!"

That afternoon, His Royal Highness (as he is addressed at Court) went riding. His horseback lessons began when he was a little more than two and one-half years old. If he does not prove the best horseman in his kingdom, as is his father today, it will not be for lack of early training.

The Crown Prince has one remarkable faculty which is already phenomenally developed, and which is bound to prove of enormous value to him in the future. That is an exceptional memory for faces—and names. He knows perfectly well every face about the palace, and certain members of the

court whom he sees but seldom he remembers as readily as those he sees every day. For many of the intimates of the household he has his favourite nicknames, usually established by his Royal Highness when the proper names are too long or too difficult for his baby mouth. The Royal Governess is the Marquesa Maria de Salamanca. This is rather sonorous for the Prince so he always calls her "Mia-manca," a natural contraction of the two names. This trait is one that was very pronounced in his father when he was a child. Many anecdotes are still current of the embarrassment the baby King Alfonso would frequently cause his nurses and governesses and even his mother, the Queen Regent Maria Cristina, by the curious and quaint names he would dub various courtiers and grandees who were frequently staid and dignified old gentlemen.

There is something unmistakably regal in the manner and bearing of the Prince of Asturias. He seems to have a full realisation of who he is, and of his own importance. This spirit is naturally fostered by his environment. Officers and soldiers everywhere salute him, while courtiers and populace uncover when he approaches. Being the recipient of universal obeisance almost from his cradle accustoms him to continual homage and he comes to expect it from everyone.

The coachman Corral who drives the big mules to the nursery coach is a prime favourite with the princes. One day, just as they were about to go

for their afternoon drive the Prince of Asturias went to the King and asked for a cigar. The King was greatly surprised at the request, coming from the Prince who was then not much over two, but he gave the young man a cigar and watched with much curiosity what he would do with it. The cigar was carefully carried throughout the drive and on the return to the Palace the Prince handed it to the coachman. Since then he frequently brings a cigar with him for the coachman, but if for any reason he becomes displeased with the coachman over something during the drive he carries it back upstairs for another day when the coachman is better behaved!

The Prince of Asturias has his mother's fondness for sweet chocolate, and Her Majesty keeps a supply always at hand to reward the princes for good behaviour, and every day after luncheon they each get a piece anyway.

The Queen was taken ill during the week that the King was in London attending the funeral of King Edward. The Prince of Asturias seemed considerably worried when he learned that his mother would not be down for luncheon. The Queen Mother, Maria Cristina, who lives in the Royal Palace, noticed the anxious look on the face of her grandson and inquired what was the trouble.

"I am thinking," he replied, "that if mother is ill and father is in London—who will give us chocolate to-day after lunch?"

One afternoon the Prince of Asturias was

naughty. In the Casa de Campo he had been very cross, and had been reprimanded. That night at supper-time when the dessert was placed before him he said: "To-day I was naughty. I do not deserve these sweets. Dessert is not for naughty children. But before I was naughty; now I am good. Now I deserve my sweets, so I shall take this dessert."

This self-depreciation as well as appreciation is one of his characteristics. He is as quick to admit his own disapproval of himself, as he is to insist on approval at other times.

One day when His Majesty was going to a pigeon shoot just outside of Madrid he took the Prince of Asturias along in the automobile. The little Prince was greatly pleased at this and very proud. During the next several days he went about the Palace telling everybody how pleased he had been with the excursion.

Travelling also delights the little man. He has from his earliest months been interested in railroad trains and the journeys to Seville in the winter time, to La Granja in the spring, and to San Sebastian in the summer are great treats to the nursery.

When the Prince of Asturias was about a year old the Royal Family moved to La Granja. One afternoon the Queen was walking in the gardens with one of her ladies-in-waiting when it occurred to her that she would like to go outside of the Palace grounds for a stroll down one of the country

lanes. So without any other escort than her one lady companion she started out. Presently they met an old peasant woman trudging toward them carrying a basket. As she came nearer she recognised the Queen and moved toward her. The lady-in-waiting, not understanding the motive of the peasant woman, quickly stepped in between her and the Queen, but the Queen at once said, "No—let her speak. She has something she wants to say to me." The woman then told the Queen that in the basket she carried a litter of baby rabbits and they were so pretty and cunning that she thought the little Prince would like them—and would Her Majesty not send them to the Prince. The Queen peeped into the basket and was so delighted with the wee warm bunnies that she told the woman to bring them herself to the Prince, and to the astonishment of the lady-in-waiting and the unbounded joy of the peasant woman the Queen led the way back to the Palace and up to the nursery where the Prince duly received the bunnies and was highly pleased with them.

At another time, in Seville, a litter of rabbits was presented to the Prince of Asturias. This time the rabbits were bigger and lively. Someone left the cover off the basket and the rabbits all jumped out and ran off through the Palace, affording the Prince much amusement, but creating no end of trouble for the nurses who had to catch them.

CHAPTER XI

THE ROYAL NURSERY OF SPAIN

THERE is a striking contrast between the two princes. The Prince of Asturias is absolutely fair with flaxen hair, while Don Jaime is as dark as a typical Spaniard. Even at the age of two, his hair is dark and his eyes are as lustrously brown as his father's.

All three of the children are learning to speak English, Spanish and French, with equal fluency. They have between them two English nursery governesses and one French maid in addition to a usual number of Spanish maids and other servants. Their mother, the Queen, was brought up familiar with French and German, in addition to her own English, while King Alfonso was taught English, French and German from his boyhood. It is expected that a modern king be able to talk and think in two or three languages, but it is exceptional to find a crown prince of three who can already express himself in three tongues.

When speaking to his mother, the Queen, the little Prince invariably uses English, but with his father, the King, he uses Spanish. He seems to know instinctively one tongue from the other. If he is handed something—for example, a box—he

will take it and pronounce the word in English and Spanish and sometimes in French also. In that way he seems to instinctively teach himself the three languages simultaneously.

The two Princes are naturally constant playmates. In the Casa de Campo where they are taken every morning at half-past ten they play in the sand together and stand up their little toy soldiers. As I had the privilege of playing here with them one morning I shall have more to say of this later. The Crown Prince usually refers to his brother as "my brother, the Infante," never as Don Jaime or Jaime, although occasionally he lapses into English and calls him "Jimmy."

The Princes are very fond of each other, but like all children they have their quarrels now and again. The Crown Prince has a good deal of a will of his own and sometimes his nurses find him something more than a handful. One morning he rushed up to the Royal Governess and said: "My brother the Infante has been very naughty, *very* naughty, so I kicked him and he cried. But now he is no longer naughty so I shall run and kiss him," whereupon he rushed off to the playroom in the châlet where he found Don Jaime and tenderly kissed him.

Don Jaime has one of the sweetest baby faces I have ever seen. He has inherited his father's soft, beautiful eyes and winning smile. His nature is said to be as lovely as his smile. He is a great favourite in the Royal Household and already is

manifesting unusual signs of keenness and intelligence.

Curiously enough, the newspapers of Europe including England, and also of America, have from time to time printed stories to the effect that these two Princes are deaf and dumb and otherwise defective. These rumours are all baseless slanders. The King's secretary has been put to great trouble writing to inform people all over the world that there is no truth in these stories. On one occasion the Prime Minister found it necessary to issue a public signed statement to the effect that he had personally talked with the Princes and that he knew them to be mentally and physically fit and normal. As a matter of fact, I found them both unusually sturdy boys with exceptional intelligence for their years.

In this connection I had a striking experience of the way these stories are circulated. The second or third day after I arrived in Madrid the head porter at my hotel said to me: "So you are the American physician?"

"What American physician?" I asked in surprise.

"The doctor who has been brought from New York to attend the Crown Prince."

"No," I replied, "I am not a doctor. How did you come to think that I was?"

He thereupon explained that shortly after my arrival in Madrid the King's private secretary had called for me at my hotel and that directly after I

had been seen entering the Royal Palace. This aroused some curiosity among the hotel people and finally someone concluded that as I wore a Vandyke beard I must be a physician, and as I had gone to the Palace I had undoubtedly gone to examine the Princes who were said to be deaf and dumb! This absurd tale circulated about the capital and as it went from mouth to mouth details were added, and that which at first was characterised as probable and circumstantial became absolutely definite.

It is really cruel to spread such nonsensical stories about two such bright boys as the Prince of Asturias and Don Jaime.

Both the Prince of Asturias and Don Jaime are devoted to horses and all the trappings of the stables. They are also very fond of cats. There is one big nursery cat which is an especial favourite. So far they have not taken much interest in dogs, and in fact there isn't even one dog about the Royal Palace in Madrid. Formerly the King had many dogs, but now very few and these are kept in the country. The Queen had a dog which was presented to her by her uncle, the late King Edward of England, but one day at La Granja the dog strayed away—as the best of dogs sometimes will, even when their masters are sovereigns and their abode a royal palace.

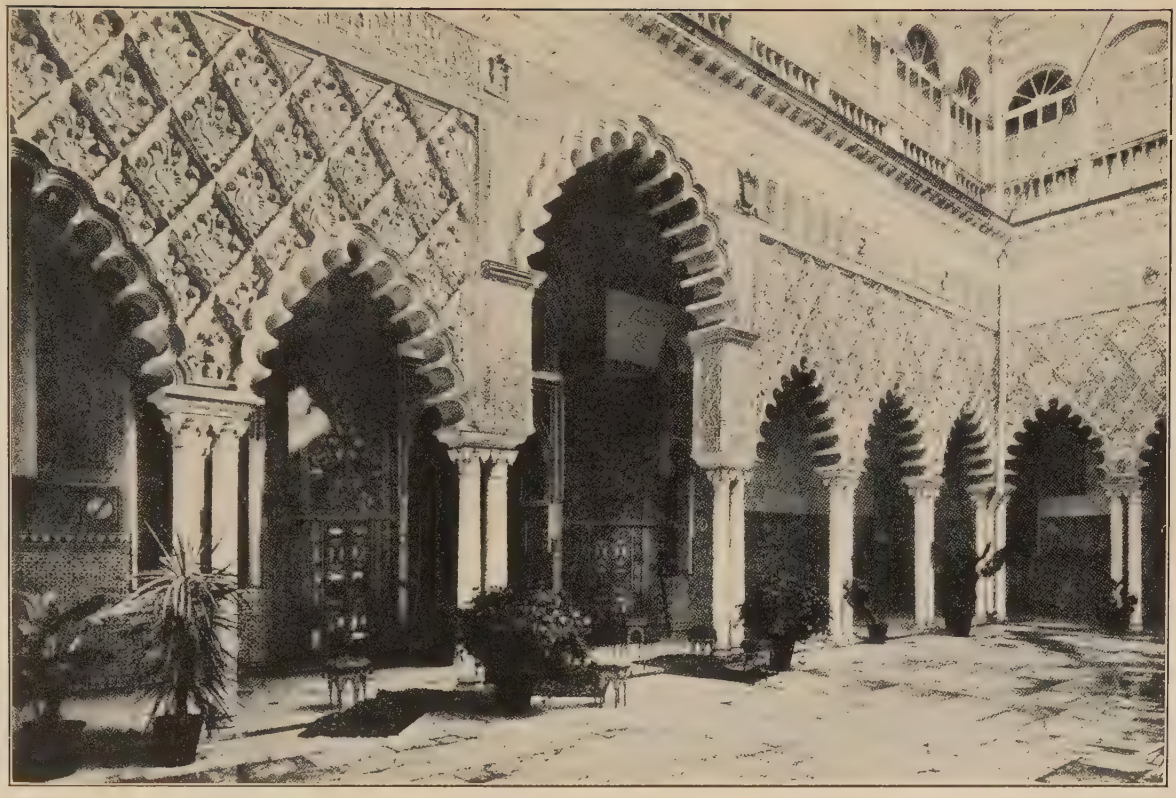
The palace of the Alcazar in Seville is a favourite residence with the Princess just as it is with the Queen. The gardens of this old Moorish pal-

ace are very delightful and here the Royal children love to play just as their father did when he was a boy. Down one of the walks is a series of tiny holes. Ordinarily no one would even see them. It was a favourite prank of the little Don Alfonso to send some unsuspecting person along this walk while he loitered in the rear; suddenly he would turn a hidden wheel and instantly a fine stream of water would shoot up through each of these squirt holes, to the astonishment and oftentimes consternation of the victim of the Royal joke.

There is a maze of boxwood in these gardens which affords the children endless amusement. A stranger once entering this maze gets completely entangled and bewildered. It takes even an adult some time to discover the path leading out. Here, too, are several small ponds stocked with gold fish and every day the Princes visit the ponds to feed the fish.

The Prince of Asturias is especially fond of playing in sand, and on his third birthday the Queen bought for him a set of sand pails and little shovels which pleased him tremendously.

One day I was in the nursery playroom at the Alcazar and I took occasion to examine the toys of the Royal children. What was my surprise to find a great assortment of little tin mechanical toys such as one sees exhibited all along Fourteenth street or Twenty-third street—toys that cost about ten cents each. The things that are wound up with a



THE COURT OF THE VIRGINS AT SEVILLE.

key and then rush about in circles. There were boxing men, and little go-carts drawn by monkeys and donkeys and a great assortment of similar devices.

Of course, they have many grand toys, gifts from sovereigns, potentates and ambassadors, but so far neither of the Princes has exhibited any particular predilection for these expensive toys. The simple ten-cent things afford them as much pleasure as anything.

The favourite toy of the Crown Prince for a long time was a doll dressed as a soldier. The one positive passion that this little fellow has as yet revealed is soldiering. To most children, soldiering is the most fascinating thing in the world. But to the Prince of Asturias, soldiers are almost an obsession. The sound of bugles and drums excites him tremendously and he never wearies of watching troops at drill or on parade. The guard mount at the Royal Palace in Madrid takes place every morning at eleven o'clock, and is considerable of a ceremony, many troops being employed and representing several branches of the army—infantry, cavalry and field artillery, while two bands are constantly playing. The Prince's room in the Palace looks out upon the esplanade where this takes place, and never a day does he fail to watch this when he is in the Palace. This is another trait inherited from his father.

Another remarkable evidence of more than ordinary brightness in the Prince of Asturias in his

familiarity with the different uniforms. He knows them all and rarely makes an error. Even from his window looking down into the street, he can distinguish an artillery uniform from the infantry,—a lancer from a halberdier.

Queen Victoria Eugenie is one of the most devoted of mothers. As it has been the policy in Spain for queens-consort to hold aloof from politics, she has been able to devote more of her time than would ordinarily be the case to her children, without at the same time neglecting other duties of queenship.

She is devoted to each of them alike, with a possible special fondness for the Infanta Beatrice. But the Infanta is only one year old and as she is the baby as well as the one daughter, this slight preference is understandable.

The Princes get up every morning at half-past seven. After their bath they repair at once to the Queen's room and remain for an hour or more. Thus is every day started.

Every bright morning when the Royal Family is in residence at Madrid all three children are taken to the Casa de Campo to play, at half-past ten. When they tire of their play they drive a little, and the Prince of Asturias takes his morning ride on his pony "Belaye," and then they go to the pretty little châlet which has been built for them in the park and enjoy a nap before luncheon. The Prince is keen to hear stories—especially sto-

ries about soldiers. They must be invented stories, however, and each morning the governess or one of the nurses is implored to tell a story. Generally he drops off to sleep before the story is finished, which is what he likes. At bedtime the Queen generally tells him a story until he falls asleep.

One Monday morning in one of the rooms of the private apartments in the Royal Palace at Madrid I noticed a suspended sheet. There were a group of chairs in front and obviously the sheet had been used as a screen for lantern pictures. Upon inquiry I was told that every Sunday evening the King and Queen and all the Royal Family dine together informally—*en famille* as it were—and after the meal they all adjourn to the adjoining room for a biograph exhibition. These Sunday evening suppers and entertainments constitute one of the most charming features of the Spanish court life.

The children of the Spanish Royal Family are especially fortunate in having parents who are above all things human—vibrant with youth, indulgent with the pranks and pleasantries of childhood. It is not so long since King Alfonso himself was a mischievous lad, and Queen Victoria Eugenie a capricious girl. According to all reports, the boy Alfonso was quite as full of spirit and mischief as the average small boy anywhere in the world.

King Alfonso even now has not outgrown this

love for fun. The first Shrove Tuesday that Queen Victoria was in Spain she was made the victim of a joke by her Royal spouse and his sister, the Infanta Maria Teresa. As Her Majesty was passing through one of the corridors of the Palace the King and the Infanta suddenly sprang out upon her, disguised behind masks, giving her a considerable start. This is the survival of an ancient custom in Spain peculiar to this particular day. This boyishness is constantly cropping out, often to the amusement of the court. There can be no doubt that when the little Princes are old enough to indulge in practical jokes that they will find their Royal father and mother the most sympathetic of parents.

I had seen the Royal children a good many times during my stay in Spain, but I had had no opportunity for close observation of them. I wanted to see them at play, and to take some snap-shots of them with my own camera. None of my friends at court quite knew how to obtain this privilege for me. The request was without precedent, as the Princes have not yet reached the age of holding audiences. So I spoke to His Majesty the King about it. I broached the matter delicately, but without the slightest hesitation the King replied: "Most certainly you may meet them. In the Palace if you like, but they are so little I am afraid they would be shy and quiet. The best thing would be for you to go to the Casa de Campo one morning and play with them. There you may also

have your camera and take as many snap-shots as you like. And if the pictures are good," he continued, "you will let me show them to Her Majesty the Queen who is always much interested in all photographs of the Princes."

CHAPTER XII

THE PRINCES AT PLAY

I THANKED His Majesty warmly for this unusual courtesy, and the second morning after Señor de Torres called for me at my hotel just before ten o'clock and we drove together to the Reserve in the Casa de Campo. The Marquesa de Salamanca, who is the First Royal Governess, passed us in an automobile near the entrance. The Marquesa de Puerta, who is the Second Governess, was not there that morning. We arrived a brief moment behind the nursery. The Princes and their nursemaids were still in the mule coach driven by Corral, the favourite nursery coachman. Behind was the little open carriage drawn by the two donkeys "Sol" and "Luna," and the tiny Shetland pony, "Belaye," of the Crown Prince.

As we approached, the Marquesa de Salamanca lifted the Prince of Asturias from the carriage and brought him in her arms toward us, presenting him as the Little Crown Prince. Anticipating her, however, the little fellow cried out: "Kaulak—Kaulak, is coming." Now, Kaulak is a Madrid photographer who takes most of the photographs of the Royal family and the Prince had noticed the cameras in my hand. The Marquesa told him, as

she put him down at our feet, that I was not Kaulak, though I had cameras and could take his picture. He surveyed me critically for a moment and then came and posed himself before me with his little right hand at salute, asking that I first take him that way. He wore the same broad-brimmed white straw hat encircled by a pale blue ribbon and the cunning little white flannel suit in which I had first seen him going out to drive. He tried valiantly to wrestle with my name but this proved too much of a mouthful.

The two English governesses and the French maid gathered the children's toys from the coach and we started for a stream of water where the children wanted to play. As we started the Infante Don Jaime was brought over. He is a dear boy with a wonderfully sweet and friendly smile. It was evident from the first moment that he, at least, had no intention of standing on ceremony. The wee Infanta Beatrice was too sleepy to pay much attention, so she was put to rest in an ordinary baby carriage and was soon trundled fast asleep.

The Prince of Asturias first took up the sand pail and shovel that had recently been given him by his mother the Queen for his third birthday. Don Jaime, however, found more interest in the water. He splashed the stream for a few minutes then toddled off to a spring and began tossing stones into the water, laughing with delight at each splash. When he had used all of his stones he asked me to recover them. This was a task, but

I rolled up my sleeves, and getting down on my knees I began to pick them from the bottom one by one and arrange them around the spring wall. Just as I finished the Prince of Asturias ran up and seizing the largest stone of all splashed it violently back into the water, wetting me from head to foot. This gave them both great pleasure and they laughed tremendously. "See," exclaimed the Infante, "I have given you a bath!"

The next moment the Prince decided that my dress was incomplete, as I had no flower in my buttonhole. He asked me if I wouldn't like him to get me a nice flower. I told His Royal Highness that I should be very pleased. So away he went to the flower beds. He was critical in his selection. A number of flowers were successively rejected. Finally he plucked a beautiful white rose and bringing it back placed it (with a little assistance) in my buttonhole. Don Jaime, in the meantime watched his brother with evident interest and decided that it was his turn to do something toward entertaining me. So he went off to the strawberry bed and picked some luscious ripe berries to feed me.

The morning was unusually dark and gloomy for Madrid in June, and I am very much of an amateur at photography, consequently dependent upon bright light. About eleven o'clock the clouds lightened somewhat and I got out my cameras. Instantly both Princes were interested. The Prince of Asturias particularly seemed to enjoy

having his picture taken. I snapped him repeatedly and found that he never seemed to weary of posing for me.

The Infanta Beatrice had now waked up, so she joined us. Corral, ever attentive and watchful, took great delight in catching the eye of the small Princess so that her face should be turned toward the camera. She showed a silent interest in the performance, but her little eyes were still heavy with sleep and it was evident that she would much have preferred to remain in her perambulator. She grew alert, however, when the donkey carriage was brought round. She enjoys her rides about the gardens, sitting by the side of her brother Don Jaime.

Don Jaime climbed into the carriage by himself and picked up the whip. The Infanta thought that she should hold this and straightway reached out her hand to grasp it. The two wrestled back and forth until between them they dropped it onto the ground. Then there was storm and tears.

When I looked round the Prince was proudly seated on Belaye. Belaye is one of the smallest of Shetland ponies, and his saddle precisely like a toy. It is not quite a real saddle for it has a seat and straps to secure the little rider. But these are the first lessons of the Prince in riding. By the time he is six he will doubtless mount a real saddle and ride just like a little man.

Besides his Shetland pony he has two little donkeys, so tiny that any man could carry one under

each arm. These are harnessed to a little cart and the young Prince takes his first lessons in driving in the beautiful and extensive park behind the Royal Palace, known as the *Casa de Campo*. Formerly he had a third donkey called "Astra," but Astra died. Sometime after this distressing event the Prince was asked about Astra by someone in the Palace, and he made answer with a certain manner of mystery, "Oh! he is gone away. He is in the Casa de Campo eating strawberries."

In amusing contrast to these dwarf donkeys are four sturdy mules which are attached to the big nursery coach in which ride not only the Prince of Asturias but also his brother Don Jaime, his sister Infanta Beatrice and two of their nurses. Beside the carriage, ride two splendidly mounted equerries and behind, two Royal grooms. On the whole, it is an imposing cavalcade, this nursery out a-airing.

The two Princes—aged three and two respectively—sit on the main seat. A brace for their feet has been adjusted to the carriage and two leather belts keep them securely in place. One day I was going into the Palace just as the nursery was about to start out. The little Prince and the Infante were in their seats and the baby Infanta was just being brought downstairs. As I passed the carriage, I raised my hat to the wee boys, both of whom were dressed in white with broad-brimmed straw hats. Instantly, two little hands were raised to their right temples, elbows out, eyes front—all

with military precision. No soldier could have given a truer salute. It was so charming, so unexpected, that I laughed outright. On later days when I saw them out driving, I noticed that each time they passed a flag they saluted it, and each time an officer or soldier saluted them, the salute was returned.

The morning wore on till noon time when Don Jaime grew overpoweringly sleepy, and the Prince grew anxious for his morning story—preliminary to his noon nap. We drove and rode and picked more flowers and threw more stones into the water and made more sand piles—and we were all very happy. I found them wholesome, hearty children, normal in all respects, bright beyond their years, and well developed. How the baseless stories concerning their supposed infirmities and defectiveness ever started, is a mystery to me, unless political enemies of the monarchial parties set them in circulation with malice aforethought.

After my morning with them in the Casa de Campo some people at my hotel said to me: "What a pity that the Princes are not right in their faculties!"

"But they are perfectly right," I replied, indulgently, " those stories are pure nonsense."

"Oh! no, sir. You must be mistaken."

"How can I be mistaken?" I answered, "I have just spent a morning with them and I found them not only normal in every way, but particularly intelligent."

"That cannot be," was the reply, "because it is said that they are defective."

I began to grow indignant and finally I gave up the controversy. After I had gone they asked one another, as I later learned, how much the King had paid me to say that the Princes were all right! What is one to do with such people? And this is characteristic of what is met often in Madrid.

The Prince of Asturias is to-day one of the loveliest of children. Presently he must submit to the discipline which will make of him a strong, fearless man fit to lead and rule a nation. If he lives he will succeed to the throne of Spain as King Alfonso XIV.

There is no better wish that I may express for my readers than that when they come to this beautiful summer land of Spain, they may have something of the same privileges I have enjoyed; that they may meet this manly, courageous, wise King, Alfonso XIII—face to face, clasp his hand in hearty grasp and sit with him in his study by the hour listening to his clear-cut, incisive conversation, enjoying his ideas and ideals, all expressed in most excellent English; or go with him to the beautiful polo ground and watch him play the fastest sort of game, riding his beautiful ponies brought over from the Argentine Republic; that they may meet the beautiful Queen Victoria Eugenie, the English Princess, who is the true heroine of this romance and perhaps hear from her own lips the story of

the beautiful prophesy of her father, now long dead, that one day she should come to Spain and be very, very happy. Perchance, indeed, some favoured ones may be shown the Spanish fan he sent her from Seville and which is to-day her most treasured possession. Above all, I would wish that all might spend a morning such as I spent in the Casa de Campo with the little Princes, playing in the sand, splashing water and eating strawberries plucked by these dear, little, Royal hands and carry away a pure white rose, selected and plucked by him who will one day, God willing, be King Alfonso XIV of Spain.

PART II

EMPRESS ALEXANDRA FEODOROVNA OF RUSSIA

PART II

EMPRESS ALEXANDRA FEODOROVNA OF RUSSIA

CHAPTER I

"SUNNY"

"THE most beautiful Queen on any throne," she was called when first she became Empress of all the Russias. She still is tall and stately, her hair is luxuriant and rich in colour. Eyes that some call blue and some call grey look out through long, dark lashes, and in them lies a great sadness, an appealing wistfulness touched with regret, a silent melancholy betraying soul tragedy. Yet as a child she was known as "Sunny."

The life story of "Sunny" has never before been comprehensively told in English. This is curious, because there probably is not a person in the whole world who would not like to hear the wonderful romance of how a poor little German Princess became a great Sovereign, the co-ruler of one of the vastest empires on earth, the mistress of a fabulously rich and bewilderingly extravagant court, and with opportunity for becoming the most powerful woman in Europe. "Sunny" was the childhood nickname of

this little Princess, and after the hardships and vicissitudes of a quiet girlhood, where there was a constant struggle to maintain appearances, she was courted by a wayward gallant who was heir to a mighty crown. "Sunny" lost her heart to the Royal wooer, and he, putting aside the less noble loves of his reckless, youthful days, pledged himself to her —persistently courted her against wide opposition —turned a deaf ear to the councils of Emperors and Queens who tried to discourage the match, and after years of battling with diplomatic intrigue and personal restraint he carried his purpose, married the German Princess who was truly the bride of his heart, and in marrying her raised her from the obscurity and poverty of her own simple home to the exalted rank of Empress. This is the true story of Princess Alix of Hesse whom Nicholas II made Tsaritsa of Russia!

There is something tremendously dramatic about this little German Princess stepping out of the quiet of her Darmstadt home into the arena of world affairs, and taking her position as Empress over one hundred and forty millions of people. Yet, of her life, almost nothing is known by the world at large.

No woman of modern times has had such marvellous opportunities for the exercise of personal influence and power. Yet who knows her? I had seen her in St. Petersburg, I knew men and women of the Court who had told me things about her from time to time. But I felt less acquainted with her life than that of any sovereign in Europe. I turned

to the magazine and newspaper files of the last fifteen years and I was amazed at the meagreness of information concerning her. I made diligent inquiry among people who frequently are veritable mines of gossip and stories concerning Royal personages, but scarcely a thing could I gather concerning the Tsaritsa who in many ways occupies the most unique position of any woman in the world. When I set forth in all seriousness to learn of her from her childhood to the present time, to gather the details of her charming romance and the story how she became the wife of an Emperor, I found I must go far afield—overseas, to Germany, to Russia; I must seek my information from her courtiers, her ladies-in-waiting, her friends, princes and princesses of the realm, tutors of her children, servants in her palaces, officials of the Imperial Household. So I went. I talked with all these people and many more besides, and the story I set down here is the story of her life, as I have heard it piecemeal from the lips of those who have been closest to her during the years that she has occupied a position of world eminence.

The Tsaritsa is now thirty-nine years old. She was born at Darmstadt, Germany, June 6, 1872, and christened Princess Alix-Victoria-Helene-Louise-Beatrix. She was the youngest daughter of the Grand Duke and Duchess of Hesse and the Rhine. Her mother was Princess Alice of England, daughter of Queen Victoria.

Her sister, Princess Victoria, became the wife

of Louis of Battenberg; her sister Elizabeth became the wife of the Grand Duke Sergius of Russia, uncle of the present Tsar; while a third sister became Princess Henry of Prussia. Prince Henry is the brother of Emperor William of Germany, and he is the official head of the German Navy. The only living brother of these remarkable sisters eventually came into the title of Grand Duke of Hesse and the Rhine, which he holds today. Besides all these close connections with important Royalties, she was a niece of King Edward of England and cousin to innumerable lesser Royalties. After her marriage she became connected with the courts of Denmark and Greece.

The Dukes of Hesse were made Grand Dukes during the time of the Napoleonic wars and Grand Dukes they have remained to this day.

Thus Princess Alix has always had grand connections, but the duchy of Hesse and the Rhine was poor and as the Grand Duke, her father, was not even ruler of the Duchy, and possessed of only small financial resources, the family household was forced to accept a comparatively frugal régime. There are hundreds of girls in America to-day who have never felt the press of poverty as did Princess Alix through the early years of her life. The little Princess was taught to sew and to assist in home duties, not only because this was all part of the proper training of a princess, but because of necessity.

The simplicity of this home was like the sim-

plicity of an ordinary German or English middle class home of to-day. In her letters to Queen Victoria, the mother of Princess Alix was wont to speak very freely of the straitened circumstances of the family. Some of the items and incidents mentioned in these letters can hardly be credited. For instance, in one letter the death of a cow is lamented—"because it will be so difficult to get another." In another she sends thanks for some furniture. In another the summer holiday is discussed and frank acknowledgment made that they cannot afford to go to Sheveningen, the charming and fashionable Dutch watering resort a few miles from The Hague, because it is too costly, but they must be content with Blankenberghe which is treeless, dull and uninteresting, but more reasonable of price.

Princess Alix's allowance of pocket money was twenty-five cents a week up to the time of her confirmation, when she received double that amount. Alix was the youngest born of the Grand Duke and Duchess and was called "Alix" because Queen Victoria had always been annoyed at the way Germans pronounced Alice. And so at her suggestion Alice was changed to Alix to simplify it for the people of her own country. "Alicky" she was frequently called by her mother, but the neighbours and friends of the family early came to call her the "Little Princess Sonnenschein," and from this came the name of endearment which she carried for so long—"Sunny."

"Baby is a sweet, merry little person, like Ella (her sister), but her features are smaller," her mother once wrote to Queen Victoria, "and her eyes are darker, and she has very long lashes and auburn hair. She is always laughing, and with a deep dimple in one cheek just like Ernie." (Ernie was her brother who is now Grand Duke of Hesse and the Rhine.) On another occasion her mother wrote: "She is indeed the personification of her nickname 'Sunny.'" During all this time Empress dreams were far off, and the big world with its infinite possibilities, its large joys and burden of days, but visions of twilight hours. When she was only six years old her mother died. This was the first deep shadow of her life, and from that time on she carried little responsibilities that tended to weigh upon her, to drive her more and more into herself, and perhaps to plant the seeds of moroseness which some say is now a quality of her character. At twelve the True Romance of her life came to her.

Princess Elizabeth, the older sister of Alix, had been courted by Grand Duke Sergius, of Russia, an uncle of the present Tsar and brother of the then reigning Emperor. In 1884 Sergius came to Darmstadt for his bride, and young Nicholas was of the Royal party. Nicholas here met Princess Alix for the first time and in her saw his future bride—the future Empress of his country. Nicholas, though nearly four years older than she,

was only sixteen, but sometimes hearts can choose their own at sixteen as surely as in later years, and if love has since been the dominant element in the family life of this royal couple, it entered in, there in Darmstadt at this early time.

CHAPTER II

COURTSHIP AND A JOURNEY TO THE NORTHLAND

FROM the hour of their first meeting, Princess Alix never doubted the love of her young Russian scion, whose still boyish heart she knew she had reached. Child as she was, Princess Alix already felt germinating within her beginnings of woman love, and from that time through all the following girlhood days, through her period of lovely maidenhood, she held in close memory the picture of her first wooer. That her young lover was less faithful was not so much a matter of surprise, because first of all being a man, and especially a Russian man, not to include a Prince besides, Nicholas naturally went the way of all the rest, the way of so many men, of most Russians, and of all Princes, and under the tutelage of his relatives, the Grand Dukes, and other unavoidable corrupt associates of the Court, he sowed his wild oats as part of the day's work, and as a matter of course, sowed them furiously and very, very wildly. Nicholas' mother, spouse of the Emperor Alexander III, herself early suggested that a mistress for the young Nicholas might be well as a choice of evils, the lesser one. Thereupon, Nicholas was taken to the Imperial Ballet, there to make his choice of a

temporary love. The woman whom he chose at that time lives to-day in St. Petersburg, in a grand palace, given her by the little man who now rules the mighty Empire of Russia, built by money exacted from thousands of starving peasants throughout the length and breadth of the vast empire.

Perhaps—for a time—Nicholas forgot the little German girl, but she never forgot her Prince! Perhaps Nicholas was lacking in that blessed quality we call "loyalty." Or it may be that he was only weak of character as most of his friends of the time would have us believe. At all events, he was not even true to his Polish dancer, and when he became infatuated with a Jewess, his Imperial father cried "Enough!" and sent his son on a tour around the world. Nicholas was accompanied on this trip by another *bon vivant,* his cousin Prince George of Greece. Prince George, however, was also an athlete and a man of ready wit, and when in Japan a fanatic rushed upon the Tsarevitch to kill him, Prince George raised his arm and succeeded in so diverting the stroke that Nicholas received only a glancing blow on the forehead. Thus was he spared to return to Darmstadt and renew his suit with his love of earlier days.

Royal marriages are so rarely love matches, that the world watches the few that are with admiration and hope. Too often diplomatic objections prevent the coming together of royal lovers. And so in the case with Nicholas, his father desired the union of his son with a Montenegrin princess.

Queen Victoria never really opposed the match, but she feared for the safety of her granddaughter. The Russian throne is supposed to offer unparalleled peril to its occupants, and the health of the Princess Alix had never been rugged. Queen Victoria feared that under the great stress and strain of St. Petersburg Princess Alix would not have the strength to bear up. The Empress Frederick of Germany, an aunt of Princess Alix, was also doubtful of the wisdom of the match. Her reasons, however, were somewhat different. Empress Frederick had had many opportunities to watch the development of her sister's daughter and she had noticed, perchance with pain, certain qualities of temperament which may have been the result of her trying circumstances in early years, together with the fact that she had been left so much alone through the early death of her mother. She was reserved and shy, therefore seeming cold of nature, and haughty of manner. Having seen far less of the great world than most royal princesses she shrank from the social whirl. The loneliness of her childhood had taught her to find resource within herself, thus habits of reading, study, and contemplation had become part of her nature. These characteristics all make for the development of a splendid, substantial woman, but they fail to bring out the qualities essential to a woman who is to preside over a brilliant court, where the sway of personality, of grace, charm and wit—all of the surface virtues—count for as much, if not more,

than the deeper qualities of sound character and a disciplined mind.

Appreciating all this Empress Frederick did not encourage, even if she refrained from actively opposing the marriage.

The Polish Princess, Catherine Radziwill, chanced to be passing through Germany about this time and lingered for a few days, the guest of the Empress Frederick. One afternoon, Princess Radziwill referred to the betrothal and remarked on the happy fate which had led Nicholas to select a bride who had been imbued with the ideas of Germany and England. To her surprise the Empress gravely shook her head and remarked that it was not always safe to trust what was said by people ignorant of the true character of those they praised or blamed, according to the exigencies of the moment. When Princess Radziwill pressed the Empress further she added that "Princess Alix had a haughty disposition, and would be inclined to take more seriously than might be supposed, her position of absolute sovereign."

She went so far as to refer to the despotic temperament of her niece, and her self-opinioned tendencies. "She is far too much convinced of her own perfection," said the Empress, "and she will never listen to other people's advice, besides, she has no tact, and perhaps, without knowing it, will manage to wound the feelings of the persons she ought to try and conciliate."

Princess Radziwill remarked that it was pass-

ing strange a daughter of Princess Alice, and a grand-daughter of Queen Victoria could have such a disposition. Whereupon the Empress returned sadly: "Oh! but when do you see daughters taking after their mothers?" Then, after a short pause she continued: "It would not be possible for anyone to be like my sister."

But Alix loved Nicholas and she would be daunted by neither the perils of a restless empire, nor the fear of physical weakness or suffering, nor the discouragements of her royal relatives. And Nicholas, with that stubbornness that has ever characterised him, set about to win over all opponents to their marriage. First he appealed to his uncle, Grand Duke Serge, who had married Alix's sister, Elizabeth. Then he went to London and pleaded with Queen Victoria. Finally, he gained the consent of his own father, who was the last to yield. Then Nicholas went himself to Darmstadt to carry the news in person to his Princess who had now waited for this message for nine long years.

There still remained one important obstacle. And that this was a difficulty to the German Princess, is to her everlasting credit. According to the laws of Russia, the throne may never be occupied or shared by anyone not of the Greek Catholic faith. Now Princess Alix, being born in Germany and brought up in Germany, was a Protestant. From earliest childhood, she had been devoted to the Church and to her religion, and the tenets of the Greek Church were totally unfamiliar to her.

THE TSARITSA IS HONORARY COLONEL OF THE UHLANS OF THE GUARD.

When they were presented to her there were many things that seemed so strange that for a long time she could not acknowledge her acceptance of them.

In most royal marriages, the brides change their faith as lightly as they change their gowns, and learn the priest-taught formulas that their tutors prescribe, and subscribe to the doctrines of their adopted church without fear or question. Alix demanded intimate knowledge of all the doctrines she must accept, so learned theologians and doctrinaires were dispatched to Darmstadt to give her instruction. Many are the stories told of her long arguments with these learned men over points that were not clear to her, and of her deep prying questions into the reasons for certain regulations and laws. At one time it seemed as if she could not accept certain things that these holy men were endeavouring to press upon her and more than one rumour went abroad that the royal marriage would never take place simply because of these religious difficulties. There seemed some ground for these reports, for the priest who had been her especial instructor, one Yanisheff, at one time became so despairing of his "heretical" charge, that he left Darmstadt altogether and returned to Russia.

A long letter from the Princess was received by Nicholas, and he, instead of being hurt by the way she held out on these matters, expressed himself as highly pleased. A vigorous correspondence then passed quickly between them. And in the end, it was her love that conquered. I do not think that

Princess Alix has ever been what the world calls an "ambitious woman." No one believes that the Greek priests "converted" her. But she loved Nicholas with a love that transcended all creeds and dogmas and finally, after long hesitation, her love rose to the highest point and for his sake she "accepted" the state church of the land that was to be her future home.

At the time the betrothal was definitely announced, it was anticipated that Alexander would probably continue to reign for some years, and that in the meantime the bride of the Heir Apparent would have ample time to accustom herself to Russia, and to school herself for the difficult rôle of Empress, which she would one day have to assume.

The Russian press was flooded with stories and anecdotes of the beauty, the cleverness, and the varied accomplishments of the German Princess whom Nicholas was bringing to Russia. This was to popularise her among the people. It was said that she was a rare musician, a great scholar, and even that she had taken the degree of doctor of philosophy at some university! Flaming lithographs of her were circulated by the thousand among the peasants, and in the space of a few months her name had become a household word across the Empire and the Russian people were prepared to accept her as a worthy consort to the Heir Apparent.

The betrothal was announced in April. In Sep-

tember of the same year, Tsar Alexander's health began to fail rapidly and he was removed from the cold of the northern capital to the Royal estate of Livadia in the Crimea.

I have seen royal palaces and parks in every part of the world, but I have never seen a more beautiful place than Livadia. It is on the slope of the Crimean Alps, some of whose peaks tower more than three thousand feet above the glorious blue waters of the Black Sea that here lap the shores of Livadia. Yalta, lovely Yalta, a winter jewel daintily set in a wondrous setting of sea and hills, is removed from Livadia by only a spur of mountains easily and quickly crossed. And here, when all the rest of Russia lies frozen beneath semi-Arctic snows, roses and oleanders bloom, and ripe fruit hangs luscious for the pickers. Here winter suns are warm and winter evenings balmy.

I think the fairest nights I have ever seen have been in Yalta and on the road to Livadia when a December moon shone brightly over the restless water and aslant the lovely hills as in dream nights of June.

To this most beauteous spot in all Russia, Alexander III was taken. It was the monarch's last journey. When it became evident that the end was near Nicholas sent for his bride-to-be. Probably no woman or man in modern times has had so warm a welcome prepared. The press of Europe was echoing and re-echoing the praise of the young Princess, in happy attune with the inspired press

of Russia. The Emperor William himself went to meet the Princess at the Berlin railroad station and bid her Godspeed—she who was to wear an Imperial crown.

Warsaw was the first Russian city where Princess Alix paused on her journey to Livadia whither she was hastening in the expectancy of marrying prior to the death of Alexander III. At Warsaw she was met by her sister, the Grand Duchess Elizabeth, and farther along in the journey by the Heir Apparent. Her progress across the Empire was like a triumphal march despite the sadness that hovered over a nation whose ruler lay dying. Great arches of welcome were raised to her, and the populace turned out all along the way to do her honour.

We can well imagine the mingled feelings of surprise and awe which must have overwhelmed the retiring and somewhat austere German Princess, as she came in contact now for the first time with the great world, and with the homage of a vast people which from that day was to be her's for all the rest of the days of her life. Princes and potentates, like peasants from the isolated villages of the Steppes, bent their knees in humble obeisance, while soldiers stood at salute as she passed. She knew full well that she was leaving behind her forever the simple life she had always known up until now. She knew that she was going to a death-bed scene, between ranks of gold and silver. Though her path was scattered with flowers and

the plaudits of the people continuously rang in her ears, she knew what the end of the journey must be, and she must have known too, in a dim, tragic way, all that lay beyond the endraped gold, toward which she was speeding in the Crimea.

CHAPTER III

ASSUMING THE BURDEN

UPON arriving at Livadia Princess Alix hastened to the bedside of the moribund Emperor. The following day, in the royal chapel of Livadia she was received into the Greek Orthodox Church under the name of Alexandra Feodorovna. Her own preference was for the name Catherine, but yielding to the wishes of Nicholas, she accepted the name of his choosing. The wedding day was fixed for the following Wednesday, but the nearing end of Alexander necessitated a brief postponement—only till the end had come, and all that remained of him had been transported to St. Petersburg and laid to rest beside the remains of his father, and his father's fathers for many generations, in the golden-spired Chapel of the grim fortress of Saints Peter and Paul on the banks of the swift flowing River Neva.

Some there are, believers in omens, who attribute many of the difficulties of her life as Tsaritsa to the name she took when she was received into the Russian Church,—Alexandra Feodorovna, after the grandmother of the Tsar, her husband. For Alexandra has long been an ill-fated name in the unhappy land of Princess Alix's adoption.

A daughter of the Emperor Paul who was called Alexandra had a very tragic end. When she was but seventeen years of age her grandmother, Catherine II, arranged that she should marry the King of Sweden. The preparations for this royal wedding were all elaborately made and on the day set all was well, so far as the world knew. The tables were laid for the marriage banquet and the bride, all robed and ready, awaited her royal bridegroom. The guests were assembled and the priests stood by in their gorgeous mantles of gold. Suddenly His Majesty the King announced that he would not go on with the wedding! His courtiers and suite pleaded and implored him not to offer so terrible an insult to the daughter of an Emperor and to the whole Russian nation. But in vain. The King was obdurate.

The news was tardily announced to Catherine, whose wrath knew no bounds. The guests withdrew and the Swedish party quit the Winter Palace and returned to Stockholm. The humiliated Alexandra was given no further choice even after this terrible ordeal, but was speedily married willy nilly to an Austrian Grand Duke. But she really did not survive the shock of the failure of her marriage with the King of Sweden, and she died of humiliation and a broken heart—only nineteen years of age.

A daughter of Nicholas I was named Alexandra. She was early married to a step-son of Napoleon Bonaparte. But a fatal disease carried her off be-

fore she was twenty, again emphasising the traditional tragedy associated with his name.

Alexander II had a daughter Alexandra, a lovely, golden-haired child, but she succumbed to an illness in childhood.

No wonder then, that the superstitious feared for the future of Princess Alix, when she took for herself the name that has so often been borne by daughters of sorrow in Russia. But Alexandra was the name Nicholas chose for her, and that sufficed. The mourning family returned to St. Petersburg after the death of Alexander III and as soon as preparations could be made, the wedding took place—the entire Court laying aside its mourning weeds for one day. Thus edged in black, the official ceremonial life of the Tsaritsa began.

At the wedding ceremony, she did not show to advantage. She was reserved in her manner to the point of severity, and a trait was noticed on that day that has militated against her ever since. Despite her natural physical grace she does not know how to dress! Her simple German training had not taught her how to wear beautiful clothes. Possibly the wearing of lovely gowns well is an instinct born in some women. At all events on her wedding day, the Empress-bride failed to please the court.

A few days later when the young Tsar was receiving deputations from different parts of the Empire, there occurred a rupture between him and

some deputies from the Province of Tver, which he has never been able to outlive, and for some unexplained reason the sentiments that he then expressed in heat, were accepted as the sentiments of the Empress as well. The Chairman of the deputation humbly offered the congratulations of the people of Tver, and ventured to add that it was their hope that the new Emperor might be pleased, in the course of his reign, to grant certain liberties to his people, perhaps even a Constitution. This hope was partly based on their faith in the young Empress, whom they expected would have liberal sympathies as a result of her life in Germany and her affiliations with England. But the Tsar burst forth into a terrible tirade against such notions, told them "to be done with these idle dreams," and even threatened the whole deputation with banishment.

The whole country was astounded at this uncalled for outburst, and a lurking suspicion sprang up that the Tsaritsa might not be so liberal as they had hoped. And this indeed seems to have proved true, for whatever influence the Tsaritsa has exerted in Russia from that day to this, has been in the direction of Reaction and severe administration. She has always accepted the point of view of her husband. Nicholas II believes himself a God-ordained Autocrat, and the great ambition of his life is, not to hand on to his successor a happy and peaceful nation living under a constitutional monarchy, but an absolute autocracy, and Alexandra

Feodorovna has supported and worked for the realisation of this ambition.

When one remembers the glorious, golden romance of this girl, one's imagination is fired to highest heat, and one rejoices when the child who was called "Sunny," who early battled bravely with life, was at last coming unto her own. But alas! At the very moment when it would seem that Providence had filled her cup to the full, the dark clouds began to gather, and the little German Princess, when she ceased to be Princess Alix, also ceased to be "Sunny." Instead of entering upon a period of life rich in blessings, showered with happiness, she faced graver responsibilities, greater hardships and harder battles than she yet had known. The cruelest blows of fate were yet to fall upon her.

The wedding of the Tsar and Tsaritsa was almost the only bright day of the winter of 1894 in St. Petersburg society. Mourning was resumed before even the usual wedding ceremonials were ended and few court functions were held until after the coronation, which took place the following spring. This event was looked forward to by the entire court and the most elaborate arrangements were made to make it the most magnificent and dazzling spectacle of the kind that a traditionally magnificent court had yet known, an historic occasion, notable from every point of view.

During the festivities celebrating this event, the young Empress might have been expected to have

won all hearts. Instead, the popularity of the Dowager was enhanced, and the suspicions against Alexandra, which had been aroused during the wedding celebration, were deepened.

Russia, always poor, was in especially straitened circumstances the year of the coronation. Crops had failed—the winter had been severe—and peasants were starving in different parts of the Empire. Yet the coronation show cost the Government many millions of dollars. The harness worn by the horses that drew the carriage of the Empress alone cost more than one million dollars!

The German Princess, born amid frugal surroundings, simply reared, early taught to value pennies, and never affluent, on this occasion found herself in a strange setting, indeed. Her coach followed the carriage of the Dowager Empress. Eight snow-white horses adorned with red morocco trappings trimmed with exquisitely engraved gold, champed their teeth on bits of solid gold, and above their heads waved snow-white ostrich plumes; in her shining chariot sat the Empress in a silver and satin gown with an ermine cloak over her shoulders, ropes of diamonds hanging from her shoulders, and a crest of diamonds above her head. How wonderful a change from the life she had always known! Too great a change, perhaps. For even now her manner did not please the populace. The Dowager was hailed with acclamations and unprecedented enthusiasm. The Empress was received in dead silence. The situation was an im-

possible one. She tried to smile upon the throng, but her smiles were stony and cold, and people remarked to one another that she only "stared in disdain." After the long and tedious coronation service, as the Emperor was painfully making his way to the Church of the Ascension, staggering under the weight of his royal robes and crown, he stumbled and fell in a long swoon—just as he has fallen ever since under the weight of responsibilities and cares he has never been strong enough to carry.

The following day the coronation festivities were interrupted by a terrible catastrophe. Some five thousand peasants were crushed or trampled to death in a stampede and panic preceding the distribution of certain simple meals, which were to have been in honour of the great event of the coronation. The calamity has never been satisfactorily explained, but there seems to have been a general lack of efficiency among those who had the distribution in charge. No sooner was word received of the disaster, than the Dowager Empress hurried to the overcrowded hospitals, administering personal comfort, and relief, and cheer to the surviving wounded. Her great activity and sympathetic devotion endeared her yet more to the people, and as long as she lives, thousands will revere her for her expressions of grief and solicitude on this occasion.

Nicholas, however, made himself conspicuous by doing nothing. On nearly every occasion during the course of his reign when he has had a signal opportunity for doing the right thing, he has acted

precisely as he acted on this occasion—he has turned his back and gone off. And Alexandra Feodorovna has acted in concert with her husband. They both attended the ball at the French Embassy that same night, thus horrifying not only Russia but the civilised world.

I do not believe that the Tsaritsa is lacking in heart warmth or human sympathies, but her life is dominated by one man. Before she was an Empress she was a woman, and as a woman she loved, and as a woman she gave all to that love, and to the end of the chapter one must look for the real life of the Tsaritsa in those spheres where her personal love for this one man holds sway.

From the coronation day the Tsaritsa never regained a place in the affections of the Russian people, and having recognised this fact, and having realised the futility of usurping the place of the Dowager Empress, she simply ceased trying. The Russian people don't dislike her, they merely do not know her.

When travelling through the interior of Russia, I constantly heard the Tsar spoken of by the peasants. Sometimes reverently, of late more often disdainfully, occasionally in the terms of the old Russian proverb: "God is in heaven and the Tsar is far off." But I do not recall of ever hearing a peasant speak of the Empress. When I have asked about her the *moujiks* have invariably shrugged their shoulders in silence. They often have a bright coloured lithograph of her on the walls of their houses, and they all think the picture very beauti-

ful. More than that, they know nor care not at all.

Once in an interior village I heard a group of peasants discussing the Tsar with a trace of old-time superstitious reverence and I asked, "What of the Empress?"

A shaggy old *moujik* shook his towsled head stolidly as he replied: "She is the Little Father's woman—but what can we know of her?"

The Tsaritsa entered upon a life of unusual difficulty from the moment she crossed the Russian frontier. She realised even at the time of her wedding, and more than ever at her coronation that she was not liked at court, so she did what any sensitive soul would have done under similar circumstances—she turned from the people who criticised her, who failed to appreciate her trying, turned to those whom she loved, who loved her. How many women in our own country have been through just such experiences! Not called upon to serve as queens or empresses, but summoned to positions they never were fitted or trained to occupy. With the realisation of failure comes a terrible disappointment and sorrow, sometimes heartbreak. Good women then turn to the fruits of love and in their children seek the salvation necessary to counteract the first failure.

The Dowager Empress had never approved of the marriage of Nicholas to Princess Alix. She herself had always been exceedingly popular with the Russian people. In her affliction and bereavement the sympathy and affection of the nation went

out to her. At the coronation of her son and his spouse, her warm personality so completely outshone that of her younger successor as Empress of the people, that a circle of the court immediately gathered about her. From that day to the present time the influence of the Dowager Empress and her "court party" has been more potent than that of the Tsaritsa. At times this influence has been directed openly against her rival and always to the embarrassment of the younger woman. For several years they were not even on speaking terms and to-day they rarely meet save on formal occasions when court etiquette demands the presence of them both at some particular function. The attitude of the Dowager Empress has been a source of continual pain to the Tsaritsa and besides actively militating against her, it has been one more strong influence driving her away from the usual interests and activities and more into her family life.

This estrangement between the two first women of the court has also tended more than anything else to isolate Nicholas. It has resulted in periodic ruptures between the Tsar and his mother, and it has strained his relations with his numerous relatives and important personages of the court, who have remained loyal to her.

These are some of the reasons why the life which ought to have been bright and happy has been utterly miserable, and now there are indications that a complete nervous breakdown may crown the burden of her years.

CHAPTER IV

MOTHERHOOD AND QUEENSHIP

ALEXANDER FEODOROVNA, as the wife of the Emperor, was expected to be the mother of an heir to the throne of Russia. And even here long years of enduring pain and travail were before her, for four girls were born before a son came to them. When the first child was born, in November, 1895, there was disappointment throughout the Empire. But the Tsar said a splendid thing at that time: "I am glad," said the Royal father, "that our child is a girl. Had it been a boy he would have belonged to the people, being a girl she belongs to us."

One year and a half after the birth of the Grand Duchess Olga the second daughter was born, and she was named Tatiana. Marie followed in another two years, and Anastasie exactly two years later. More than three years then elapsed before Alexis, the son and heir, made his appearance. During these three years the aid of all kinds of soothsayers and charlatans was invoked to influence the sex of the child. An old priest of the interior who had been dead seventy years was canonised in the hope that the miracle of a boy might be worked! This is a story by itself, however, and it would be premature to tell it now.

It is wellnigh impossible for people in America to understand the disappointment and vexation of the court when girl after girl was born—four of them—before the long wanted son. The Tsaritsa fell more and more into disfavour, and the aristocracy—especially those who were the friends and followers of the Dowager—took advantage of the simple, superstitious peasants to point out to them that the Empress was not beloved in heaven or she would have borne a son.

When finally a son was born many people loudly asserted that the boy was a substitution and not the Tsaritsa's child at all. This was a very malicious thing to say and was, of course, entirely untrue. The rumour persisted, however, and received certain credence until it was pointed out that the Dowager Empress was far too watchful, and too much at enmity with the Empress to allow any such imposition to be perpetrated.

Until the birth of the son the Tsaritsa took little part in public activity. Indeed, it was not until the war year of 1904 (which was also the year of the birth of a son) that she undertook to participate to any extent in work for the nation.

At the breaking out of the war between Russia and Japan the Tsaritsa undertook to assist the work of the Red Cross Society. I have seen several of the rooms in the Winter Palace which were turned over to the work of preparing bandages and warm clothing for the wounded soldiers in the hospitals

at the front. In connection with this work the Tsaritsa was conspicuous before the people for the first time since her coronation as Empress in an undertaking properly belonging to the nation. She gathered together hundreds of young ladies of the court, organised working parties, and before long among the women of aristocratic circles it was distinctly the thing to do to belong to one of the Empress's working groups, to prepare warm caps, and mufflers, and stockings and bandages for the army. The Empress herself worked indefatigably. And so did the two older Grand Duchesses, Olga and Tatiana. They both sewed and knit till their little fingers were stiff and sore.

The earnest spirit of patriotic pride and sacrifice exhibited by the Empress at this time was inspiration to thousands of young women in St. Petersburg and Moscow, and on the big estates of rich noblemen throughout the Empire. One group of fashionable St. Petersburg girls presented themselves in a body to the Empress with the request that they be sent to the front to serve as volunteer nurses. But the Empress replied: "You are not experienced enough for that work, nor strong enough to endure the hardships of life in Manchuria. What you may do is to serve in the hospitals of St. Petersburg, thus enabling the regular trained nurses to go to the front." Almost without exception these young ladies acted upon this suggestion, and many of them did most excellent service, eventually becoming as useful as nurses who

THE FIVE CHILDREN OF THE TSARITSA.

had undergone the usual training in preparation for such work.

Some idea of the extent of this work may be gathered from the single fact that in the year 1904 the depot at Kharbin alone received from the Winter Palace headquarters, over which the Empress presided in person, no fewer than eleven million eight hundred articles. In addition to these things more than a million dollars in money was collected and forwarded for the purchase of surgical instruments and such other things as were sorely needed by the badly equipped Russian forces. Some seventy ambulance trains were organised, and a number of chapels and libraries.

In thanking the corps of women who had assisted her in this work the Empress said: "I am happy to know that through the efforts of the workers in my depot my most ardent desire to give relief to our dear troops has been satisfied." And in a telegram to one of the generals commanding at the front she said: "Inform the troops in the Far East that I rejoice that it has been given me to lighten even to a slight extent the lot of the unhappy victims of a cruel war, who have so self-sacrificingly shed their blood for the honour of the Throne of Russia. United in prayer with you all I lift up to the Highest my ardent petition that He may comfort all who have suffered on the field of battle and continue to keep alive in the hearts of the valiant and heroic Russian warriors, the feeling of devotion to their duty, their oath and their love to the Fatherland."

The Empress also organised the famous "Dog Detachment," by which, with the help of dogs especially trained in Germany, the overlooked wounded were sought out after the tides of battle had swept the Manchurian plains and hills. Unfortunately this detachment was never given proper opportunity for activity, as the fields of battle almost invariably remained in the hands of the enemy.

Besides the Red Cross work, the most important public undertaking of the Tsaritsa has been the establishment of Labour Aid Institutions. This is really an incipient charity enterprise and is being gradually extended to different parts of the Empire.

Viewed as the charity organisation of a great nation the whole scheme is a ridiculous farce, but viewed as the work of an individual its proportions seem substantial. A complete list of these institutions practically means a complete list of the charities of the Empire, and includes temporary nurseries for babies, homes and asylums for children, lodging-houses for workless men, old people's homes, lying-in hospitals, institutions for the insane, libraries and reading-rooms and various depots where simple work is provided for those who are able.

I visited a number of these institutions and satisfied myself that, however satisfactory a catalogue of this work might be, that the work itself had small value. It is the crudest and most careless organisation of charity I have seen anywhere in

the world, and carried on on such a trifling scale as to be practically valueless. If the time ever comes when the Russian Government can take up the work thus begun it will be given a value—the value that ultimately accrues to all pioneer work.

There are more starving peasants in Russia every year than in any country of the western world. The numbers annually mount up into the millions —in 1906 there were twenty-seven millions in the famine belt. The beggars and workless, the maimed and the crippled victims of the war fill the streets of all the large cities. A lodging-house for fifty or a hundred men in a city where fifty thousand are in want is the merest drop in the bucket. The schools for girls are better equipped and better endowed than any of the other institutions embraced in this work, and this is owing to the personal interest of the Empress in girls.

This interest of the Tsaritsa's in girls is doubtless owing to the fact that she has so many daughters of her own. Many of the schools which she has helped to start and to support have been named after her own little girls. The "Olga Children's Homes" in St. Petersburg and Moscow were first inaugurated in 1898 and now are on a firm foundation.

In Russia, the Labour Aid Institutions are treated lightly. Even friends of the Empress speak of them as trivial. Judged by their present capacities they *are* trivial. They are badly managed. They offer rich opportunities for what is

variously called "protection," "patronage" and "graft"—opportunities which are fully taken advantage of, as I saw for myself in several of the places which I visited. There were elaborate offices, luxuriously fitted with selected furnishings, and small regiments of young aristocrats and noblemen (like all public servants of rank in Russia, called "chinovniks") serving as clerks and directors. Positions of absolute sinecure carrying rich emoluments. Not one of these institutions—outside of the orphanages—would stand the test of scientific charity or philanthropy. For all this I am inclined to give the work a higher value than do the Russian people for, after all, Russia will one day be a modern nation in forms and institutions, and then all of this work will needs be developed. It will then be good to have this little experiment scattered about the country. It may prove the foundation for a work of worthy proportions. And I am glad that the Empress may claim credit for most of what has been done. There are schools and institutions of one sort or another named after each of the children, as well as after the Empress herself, and to all of these the Empress contributes annually from her private purse.

In no sense can any, or all of these enterprises be considered a great work, but they are all characteristic of the Tsaritsa. It is indicative of simple, human sympathies, it is quiet and unostentatious—almost timidly so—but the idea underlying it all is real.

The court of Nicholas II does not entertain nearly so frequently nor so lavishly as the preceding Courts of the last hundred years. This is partly owing to the temperament of the present Tsar, and the retiring characteristic of the Tsaritsa, and also because of the troubled and distraught condition of the Empire during the last several years. Several court balls each winter are required, however, and on these occasions the Tsaritsa is always a conspicuous figure. Her own enjoyment at these Royal functions may well be questioned. In the first place, there are certain aged ministers, ambassadors and potentates with whom she must dance. Doubtless these eminent worthies are frequently endowed with great dignity, but statesmanship and imposing presence do not make up for grace and ease in tripping figures to light music. And if, perchance, the Tsaritsa would waltz with a brilliant young officer, or charming courtier, all the other dancers must at once stop and clear the floor for the Empress and her favoured partner. To be thus the observed of all observers cannot be otherwise than trying to one of so modest and retiring a nature.

Years before, when the Tsaritsa was still only Princess Alix of Hesse, she had visited St. Petersburg as the guest of her sister Elizabeth, who had married the Grand Duke Sergius. During one of the dances at a certain ball given during this visit, Princess Alix slipped on the polished floor and fell. Her partner, as well as a number of young officers,

sprang toward her to assist her to her feet, but the Grand Duke chanced to be near and he, too, sprang to her assistance. Instantly the embarrassed partner and other officers stepped back. The privilege of assisting the confused and blushing Princess was the prerogative of the Grand Duke because of his exalted position!

When the Tsaritsa does participate in a public function she does it with a stateliness and grace that commands respect, whatever of coldness her manner may suggest.

I had the privilege of being near to her on one of these occasions. It was the 10th day of May, 1906, in the Throne Room of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg.

The Emperor had called together the First Duma and the members of this extraordinary body, together with the council of Empire and the entire Court, were assembled to hear the speech from the Throne. It was the first time in sixteen months that the Royal Family had visited the capital. These sixteen months had been characterised by almost continuous revolutionary activity, successive mutinies in the army and navy, general strikes and disturbances of every description. There was wide speculation as to the probable outcome of this meeting between the Tsar and the representatives of the people. "To us," remarked one of the Ladies of Honour attached to the Empress, "to us, it is like letting the Revolution into the Palace"—this reception of the elected deputies of the people!

Members of the court were fearful lest the Tsar would never return from the Throne Room. Many, if not most of the nobles present, went in fear and trembling, and went because they had been commanded by the Emperor and for no other reason.

I met one well known Prince the morning of that day and he immediately bade me congratulate him, as he had been excused from appearing at the function.

When the music of the National Anthem was heard, announcing the approach of the Royal party the atmosphere of the Throne Room became so tense that it was painful. Not one person in the room dared think what the next minute might bring forth! When the Tsar and the Grand Dukes and the Empress and the Dowager Empress and the Grand Duchesses were all assembled before the richly attired Metropolitans and high priests for the interminable preliminary blessings, the slightest sound echoed throughout the room, so still and strained was every human being in the room. The nervousness of the Tsar was apparent to all. The agitation of the Grand Dukes was laughable, especially the manifestations of their fear in their repeated and excited crossing of themselves. Even correspondents, schooled and trained to recklessness in all kinds of danger and calm to the point of being blasé in the face of any situation, breathed hard and showed the terrible strain and tension of the minutes.

The Empresses alone appeared in full command of every nerve and muscle. I looked upon the Tsaritsa in silent admiration. The picture of her strong, immovable figure is imaged forever upon my memory. The fluttering of a glove or a handkerchief from the balcony to the floor would surely have upset the entire assemblage in spite of its magnificent show of military symbols, buttons, medals and gold and silver trappings. The thought came to me there, and I have recalled it many times since, had such an untoward incident occurred the Tsaritsa alone, or at least, the Empresses alone, would have stood stolid. The exquisite poise and complete possession of the Tsaritsa commanded absolute admiration. Cold and indifferent she may be toward the people of her court, but on an occasion like this she certainly acquits herself with rare credit. At all times a magnificent woman to look upon, tall, statuesque, imposing, imperial, she never appeared to better advantage than on this occasion.

With her, somewhat back in the procession were the four older children of the Tsar and Tsaritsa—Olga, Tatiana, Marie and Anastasie. These little girls bear the title of Grand Duchess, and in them has the life of the Tsaritsa long been centred. Presently I shall have a number of stories to tell of their nursery days. As we go on we shall learn how completely the life and time of the Tsaritsa have been taken up with her children and their home and family life.

Easter is one of the greatest fêtes of the year in

Russia. The long Lenten fast is usually kept rigorously by all classes over whom the church maintains dominion, and even by many who have ceased to reverence Orthodoxy, but in whom the instinct of traditional observance remains.

On Easter Eve there is a tremendously solemn service in all of the churches in the land. At the stroke of midnight priests and choir burst forth in loud hallelujahs and all the people shout "Christ is Risen!" "Christ is Risen!" and greet one another with a holy kiss. Everybody kisses everybody else in sight regardless of previous acquaintance. I remember standing bolt upright in a fearful press in St. Isaac's Cathedral one Easter Eve for two mortal hours in the middle of the night, the atmosphere hot and fetid till even men swooned and all wearied unspeakably.

On Easter morning presents are exchanged and masters and mistresses greet all the servants of their households with the holy kiss. The Tsar and Tsaritsa observe this custom as religiously as the humblest of their subjects, and every palace maid and stable boy is greeted in this way. Long before the hour when the Emperor and Empress are to receive the household, there is great excitement below stairs where all the servants busily scrub their honest faces with soap and water till they shine like great apples in preparation for the kiss of their imperial master and mistress. The Tsar kisses every man in the palace, even to the soldiers on duty, and

the Empress every maid servant. On one occasion the Tsaritsa remarked that she "sometimes thought the Emperor had rather the better of it because of the new leather that the soldiers wear on that day, and which smells so nice!"

In view of the fact that court observance would naturally expect the Tsaritsa to play the rôle of Empress, rather than of mother and wife as her life work, it is the more extraordinary that this mighty Queen (in point of power and opportunity) has chosen the quieter life of the home.

In addition to the private fortune of the Tsar, an immense income accrues from the gold and precious stone mines of Siberia which are worked by convicts for the private purse of the Emperor and from the vast timber holdings that he controls; besides all this, the Government officially grants him a "salary" of nearly five million dollars a year, which is paid to him in monthly instalments of four hundred thousand dollars each.

The Tsaritsa, as head of the Royal Household, is mistress of nearly thirty thousand servants, scattered in many palaces and residences throughout the Empire. It is not likely that this vast retinue is any particular care to her, for the army of servants, just like the army of soldiers, is divided into groups and officered by various functionaries. In fact, it is likely that the two armies are not dissimilar in the minds of the Tsar and Tsaritsa. Every wish of the Tsar's is a command to the army and has only to be uttered to an aide to be executed.

So the word of the Tsaritsa spoken to a lady-in-waiting is all sufficient to be carried out by any or all of her servant host.

There are fifty thousand head of cattle in the Royal pastures, and five thousand horses in the Royal stables. Over all these the Tsaritsa is supreme—as the wife and consort of the Tsar,—and one hundred and forty million subjects besides!

The point of her whole life as Empress is that when Princess Alix married Nicholas she gave herself and all of her activity to Nicholas—not to the Russian nation.

Every act of hers has been one of personal devotion. If Princess Alix had been ambitious as many women in court circles are, or if she had never loved so intensely and so blindly, the world looking back upon her career as it does to-day, might have deemed her a better Empress. As it happened, circumstances throughout her life have all driven her back from the public rôle and more into the circle of the family. Thus it comes about that the chronicler of her life must pass lightly over her life as Empress and dwell at length upon those sides of her character which the words wife and mother indicate. In other words, her entire life has been one long romance. A life of devotion to her husband and to her children, and this at the expense of her duties as Empress.

As the years have passed the disposition of the child once called "Sunny" has altered and changed, and the lines of wistful pathos which have settled

round her still lovely face are doubtless indications of the drops of gall that have tainted her cup of life's happiness. For all these mellowing lines the Tsaritsa wears an expression that in many lights is of that unusual other-worldly beauty, so seldom seen in the great world of to-day, but common to so many of the women whose portraits have been left us by the world artists of the Middle Ages. It is an expression that appears and ripens only under soul development, and as we see it in the Tsaritsa we do not find it difficult to understand and trace, for a considerable part of her life has been given over to religious thought and contemplation, and not to the study of theological doctrines and controversies only, but to the deeper truths of spiritualism and mysticism, truths whose elusiveness holds them for ever remote to all save the few, and whose realities are measured only by the standards of the eternal verities. This brings us to one of the most extraordinary, and at the same time one of the fascinating sides of the life of the Tsaritsa.

CHAPTER V

SPIRIT WHISPERINGS

AN interesting trait of the forebears of Princess Alix was their belief in ghosts. Presently we shall see that Princess Alix, even after she became Tsaritsa, gave much of her time to the study of the mystics and has always had spiritualistic tendencies and beliefs in the supernatural. Most of the Dukes of Hesse are credited with similar superstitions.

Duke George II, who lived in the seventeenth century, is said to have seen the ghost of his dead brother Wilhelm on one occasion. Before the death of Wilhelm there had been a quarrel between the two brothers. The ghost chastened and severely reproached Duke George for his bitterness and hatred. The incident made such an impression upon him that as long as he lived, he could not shake off the spell of the weird experience.

Another Duke of Hesse, a William, had a lifelong terror of ghosts and always slept in a brilliantly lighted room. A story is on record of this man that he once returned to one of his hunting lodges at night, when suddenly all of the lights went out, a great wind magically arose, doors slammed, windows shook—and presto!—the lights

as suddenly reappeared, but all of the soldiers of the guard had mysteriously vanished and the entire lodge was dismantled. Long before this the lodge was reputed "haunted," so that when the Duke was there the soldiers of the guard were changed every thirty minutes and the whole establishment kept well lighted.

Just prior to the birth of the fifth child to the Empress, a phase of temperament developed, which attracted the attention and comment of the world. From early girlhood, the Princess Alix had manifested an interest in things philosophical and theological. Back in her old home at Darmstadt, the Royal betrothal had once nearly been broken owing to the religious scruples of the bride-to-be. Princess Alix could not convince herself or be convinced that she was right in renouncing the Protestant faith of her mother and adopting that of the Greek Catholic Church. Finally, her love for Nicholas overcame her scruples of conscience and she forced herself to accept the doctrines of the State Church of Russia. Priests who had been assigned to tutor her, to this day relate their experiences and difficulties in meeting the arguments and answering the questions brought up by the Princess: the familiarity which she exhibited with German theological writings and philosophical theories confused them. In Russia, as Empress, she continued to encourage her interest in religious doctrines and theories. The friends of her own choosing were generally men and women with

whom she could discuss vital religious problems. Surrounded as she was by an atmosphere perennially surcharged with the sense of impending tragedy, she not unnaturally, developed pronounced morbid tendencies. From time to time, she believed that she caught the glint of certain gleams of spiritual truths in the distance and these she pursued with that fatal persistence which so often leads people, especially women of temperamental or melancholy tendencies to ultimately accept various "isms." The Tsaritsa became more and more markedly spiritualistic. By nature and by training, she was retiring and preferred the splendid isolation of the court in her home circle to the more brilliant opportunities offered her by her supreme social position. These tendencies toward retirement, encouraged as they were by the Court which did not take kindly to her nor exhibit at any time the cordiality and friendliness generally accorded Queens, she came to live more and more in the realms of the spiritual. She carried her intellectual interests far beyond the things we know and over into the borderland of Faith and Belief. To those who knew her well, it was not a matter of special surprise when, after the birth of three children and no heir to the throne, the Tsaritsa turned an open ear to various men who claimed supernatural control over things physical.

Prior to the birth of Anastasie, the aid of eminent medical and scientific men was sought to influence, if possible, the sex of the next child, but all

to no avail. (What pangs of bitterness must sometimes have come to her mother heart when she remembered the two boys whose father was also the father of her daughters,—two sons who could never be recognised by their own father and who were destined forever to be exiled to a foreign land because of the blot on their 'scutcheon! What piercing irony of fate for the father who must sometimes have remembered his outcast sons upon whom he had bestowed the bastard mark while the birth of a legitimate son and heir was so long deferred!)

When science failed, religion and spiritualism were appealed to. Rumours were rife of various charlatans imported from one place or another to practise their magic. Of these, the one who came to be the most widely known was called Philippe. Philippe first joined the royal entourage at Livadia. Later, he was brought to Moscow and St. Petersburg, and for several years, he is said to have exercised great influence not only over the Empress but over the Tsar as well. The Tsar has ever been an impressionable man and though he has displayed all the stubbornness of a weak nature, he has frequently been under the domination of others. Just as he was willing to lend a ready ear to Pobiedonostzeff and to his uncle, the Grand Duke Sergius, so also was he willing to listen to charlatans who came to him well recommended. It was under the Reactionary Grand-ducal party that Philippe was brought to Russia. In course of time, this man came to be known as "the Tsar's magi-

cian." An atmosphere of profound mystery always surrounded Philippe, although of the extent of his domination, there never was any question. From all that I can gather, this man's name was Philippe Landard. Landard is supposed to have been the son of a shepherd and that he was born in a small village situated high among the French Alps. When quite a boy, his father would regularly take him to the local abattoir, and on one of these visits, he made the acquaintance of a butcher who took the boy into his employ. Landard possessed imagination even as a child, as is evinced by the fact that his contract with the slaughter-house prompted him with the desire to become a surgeon. With this hope in view, he attended evening classes and night lectures in the medical school at Lyons. Handicapped, however, by lack of money and presumably not endowed with keenest intelligence, he never succeeded in passing the examinations necessary to admit him to practice. What he did succeed in doing, however, was to discover and develop certain magnetic powers which he undoubtedly had,—powers of personality which he cultivated remarkably. He turned this power especially in the direction of healing. He practised auto-suggestion and by the judicious use of massage, frequently succeeded in convincing people that his healing powers were literally real. Ultimately, he was able to establish himself as a thaumaturgist or practising healer in the Rue Tape d'Or at Lyons where he acquired con-

siderable local notoriety which presently spread all over France among people who believed in his art. At least twice, he is said to have been arrested and charged by the police as an illegal practitioner. This led him to be more discreet in his methods and he refrained from ever writing a prescription or committing himself in writing on any point. The leader of the French School of Occultism became interested in him and through him, he met Dr. George von Langsdorff of Freyburg. Dr. von Langsdorff had been brought to Russia by the Grand Duke Constantine Nicholevitch and presented to the Emperor Alexander II who had actually commissioned him to sense out and unravel Nihilist conspiracies. Dr. von Langsdorff, whether through the connivance of the political police or not we do not know, succeeded in foretelling certain plots which actually materialised. He attained considerable notoriety in connection with the blowing up of the dining-room of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg in 1880. Dr. von Langsdorff evinced considerable interest in Landard but unlike von Langsdorff and other members of the French School of Occultism, Landard ascribed his supernatural powers, both in matters of healing and prophesy, to divine influence, that is to say, whereas the French practitioners were avowedly irreligious and proclaimed themselves Freethinkers, Landard cultivated the spiritual element and professed himself a religious man.

Through von Langsdorff, Landard was brought into contact with certain members of the Russian colony of royalties who annually visit the Riviera. It was upon their invitation that Philippe visited Nice and while there was fortunate enough to win the favour of the Grand Duke Alexis. This was accomplished through curing the Grand Duke of a painful attack of rheumatism of the knee by his "laying on of the hands" method and magnetism. The Grand Duke Alexis passed Philippe on to the Grand Duchess Vladimir, who in turn brought him to Russia and was instrumental in having him put in touch with Tsar Nicholas II. From all accounts, Philippe was a man of courage, personality, of winning and sympathetic manner. The Tsar frankly liked him and before long, Philippe was established as a more or less permanent member of the Royal Household. The Emperor consulted Philippe on all kinds of personal questions and later sought his counsel in regard to the weightiest questions of state. It has even been said that during the winter of 1902-3, the influence of Philippe had grown so supreme, that a determined protest was submitted to the Tsar by the members of his council and ministers, including Conte Witte. Philippe was retired for a time from practice, but was still retained as a member of the Royal household and, privately, Nicholas continued to listen to the spiritualistic haverings of this man. From time to time, Landard also appeared to effect cures upon various members of the

Royal household and of the court. These things naturally tended to strengthen his position and to enhance his prestige. The result of these manifestations of power upon Emperor Nicholas was to confirm his confidence in Philippe's supernatural connections. In him, Nicholas thought he had found another, if not the actual reincarnation of Joan of Arc. Nicholas seems to have had little difficulty in persuading the Empress to trust in the potency of Philippe's power in regard to influencing the sex of their next child. At all events, the next child proved to be a son. Philippe claimed much of the credit for this, but it is evident that the entire credit was not accorded him by the Royal Family inasmuch as a certain parish priest in the Province of Tambov was later given credit for exerting a like influence. The priest had been dead many years, but his tomb had been made a kind of shrine by the *moujiks* and it had been annually visited by barren women who claimed to have found in the shrine the secret of fruitfulness and also the spirit of influencing the sex of unborn children.

The effect of Philippe's ministrations upon the Tsaritsa let her still deeper within the portals of the Spirit World. To conclude the story of Philippe, it is said that he became intoxicated with the power and confidence bestowed in him by the Royal Family and that he overshot himself at the time of the Russo-Japanese war. He is supposed to have been largely instrumental in persuading

Nicholas to take the attitude that he did which brought about the war and throughout the long, disastrous campaign was continually prophesying a turn in the tide which never came. Landard is said to have represented to the Emperor that he had been selected by Divine Inspiration to assure the Emperor that the war in Manchuria would inaugurate a new and great era of Russian glory that would forever overshadow the Yellow Peril which at that time was popularly feared to be menacing Europe. When disaster followed disaster, members of the Court and Royal Household lost faith in Philippe and finally the Tsar himself ordered him to leave Russia within forty-eight hours. This banishment proved a great blow to Landard, who, heart broken and covered with disgrace, returned to his own native villa of St. Julian d'Arbresle where he died the following year from a complication of internal disorders.

Despite the downfall of Philippe, the faith of the Empress was not shaken in the least in things mystic and spiritual and there is ample evidence that this inherent characteristic has in reality become a veritable second nature.

Miss Margaret Eager, an Irish lady of good education, was called to Russia in the year 1899 to serve in the capacity of Nursery Governess to the Royal Family. Miss Eager is very much of a Celt. She has a profound belief in the philosophy of mysticism and indeed she herself seems to be possessed of certain supernatural powers, second sight,

visions and dreams that come true. Miss Eager related to me various occurrences in the Royal Family concerning strange and seemingly mystical manifestations. Miss Eager herself, believes firmly in the reality of the spiritualistic sense of the Empress.

When the Grand Duchess Olga was three years old, she was taken ill with a gastric attack from which she did not fully recover for two or three weeks, the attack itself, in its severe form, keeping the Royal child in bed three or four days. The first time Miss Eager left the bedside of the sick child for a breath of fresh air, she went for a walk along the quays of the Neva. Upon her return, as she entered the room, little Olga looked up and said, "An old lady was here!" "What old lady?" she asked. "An old lady who wears a blue dress," the child replied. Miss Eager was frankly puzzled because the Court was in mourning at that time and there was no one wearing a blue dress. "Surely, you mean blue. What kind of blue?" questioned Miss Eager. "It was not like Mamma's," and the child paused. Miss Eager thought perhaps one of the maids had had a visitor and so they were all questioned, but nobody knew of any visitor during Miss Eager's absence, and so the matter for the moment was dropped and dismissed by Miss Eager as a possible vagary of the child's imagination. A few days later, Miss Eager was sitting on the floor with the Royal children in a certain room in the

Royal Palace playing at building castles of cards. Suddenly, Olga looked up and exclaimed, "There is the old lady in blue!" "Where? Where?" said Miss Eager and the other children. "There! she came through the bedroom door; she is standing at the door now!" Miss Eager quickly caught up the child and ran through the bedroom into the room beyond and into yet another room, but she could find no one nor could she hear any footsteps. "Well," said Olga to Miss Eager, " you must be very stupid because the old lady was there." Two days later, the Empress directed Miss Eager to take the child to the Chapel in the Winter Palace and there, in the hall on the way to the chapel, are two life-sized portraits of the Emperor Alexander II and his wife. Looking at the picture of Alexander II's wife, Olga said, "Why, that is the lady I saw in the blue dress and see, her dress is not the dress Mamma wears." The identification was made by the Grand Duchess with the utmost assurance.

Now, this incident by itself would have no significance, but Miss Eager relates in connection with it other incidents which give it interesting if fantastic value. Miss Eager, during her long stay in the Royal Household, always slept with the nursery. One night, she maintains, she distinctly heard a voice coming from directly beneath her bed. The voice was far off and weird and was as of one weeping bitterly and making terrible complaints and the language used was French. The

story she was relating was one of extreme intimacy. Miss Eager says that she sat up in bed to try to locate from whence the sounds were coming, but no sooner had she raised herself upright than the voice ceased. Upon laying her head on the pillow again, the voice resumed and the complaints were of her husband's unfaithfulness. While Miss Eager was still meditating the extraordinary experience, the Empress as was her wont, entered the room and Miss Eager asked her what room was directly beneath the room they were then in. The Empress replied, "Merely storerooms." Miss Eager then said to the Empress, "But there is some poor woman there and suffering from the most terrible affliction." The Empress replied, "What are you saying?" Whereupon, Miss Eager related what she had just experienced. The Empress then asked if the words were spoken in English. "No," replied Miss Eager, "It is French; at first I thought it might be the cook, but that is impossible because the French spoken was very pure and elegant." The Empress then said that if Miss Eager thought there was any one below, she had better get out of bed and listen at the floor, which she did, but could hear nothing. The Empress then told her to get back into bed and go to sleep. Immediately her head touched the pillow, the voice was again audible to her. Suddenly the Empress said, "Tell me, does it remind you of anything you have ever heard before? Do you know anything of the story of this room before it was done up for my little ones?"

Miss Eager replied that she knew that the wife of Alexander II slept in this room and then she recalled having heard that this woman was very unhappy because of her husband's numerous peccadilloes with other women. She recalled, also, that the Princess Dolgoruki was Alexander II's mistress. His wife, who used this room over a long period of time, used nightly to bury her face in her pillow and cry aloud. After she recalled these things, the Empress said, "Yes, but before she died, she went to the Dolgoruki and told her of her unhappiness, using the very selfsame words that you have just repeated to me as having heard while on your pillow." The Empress thereupon told Miss Eager that she was sleeping on the very bed which Alexander II's wife had used and upon which she died. The next day, the Empress herself, insisted that the entire furnishings of the room be changed and that a new bed be installed. It is said that Alexander II, after the death of his wife, wanted to marry the Princess Dolgoruki, which indeed, he may have done morganatically. Miss Eager was deeply impressed by this experience and in the mind of the Empress there was no question or shadow of doubt whatever.

Another incident related by Miss Eager in connection with the Empress occurred in the Palace at Peterhof. One night, according to her custom, the Empress entered Miss Eager's room. Miss Eager relates that she awoke to find herself being shaken by Her Majesty who was crying, "Awake!

awake! come back!" and when Miss Eager came to her senses, she realised that she was crying bitterly. "What is it? What is it?" exclaimed the Empress. "I have been here five minutes shaking you and you would not wake up; what is the matter?" Miss Eager replied that she must have had a nightmare. The Empress insisted upon knowing what Miss Eager had seen in her unhappy dream, whereupon, the nursery governess related that in her dream, she appeared to be in a town of some far distant country—a southern land. The streets were badly lighted; many of them were narrow and the people round about her who filled the streets, were dark and swarthy. Traversing these streets, she presently came to a great building before which a crowd had collected. As she stood and wondered what interest held the people, an open carriage drove up. The thought flashed through her mind, "Royalty must be expected; who can it be?" Just then, out of the building came an elderly gentleman whom Miss Eager did not recognise, but he was followed closely by a man in uniform. After the man got into the carriage, there was the glint of flashing steel and immediately the oldish man dropped back apparently lifeless. At once, all was turned into a mad dream and Miss Eager found herself trying to crush the Empress and the Royal Princesses under the seat of the carriage. Whereupon, the Empress laughed and said, "You can see for yourself, that it was only a dream, for you could not shove me under the seat of the carriage even if

you could succeed in putting the children there." When the Empress had gone Miss Eager once more drifted off into sleep. In the morning when she awoke, she was tired and nervous as if after some long journey. When Mary, the nurse, came in, she said, "Why, Miss Eager, what is the matter with you this morning?" and Miss Eager told her that in the night she had had a terrible dream in which she had seen a man in a carriage murdered. At breakfast time, when she saw the Empress, she said, "Have you had any more nightmares?" and then turning to the Emperor, who had just entered the room, Her Majesty directed Miss Eager to relate to him the hideous dream of the night before. Whereupon, Miss Eager related the unhappy scenes of her nightmare. The Tsar listened with the utmost attention and when Miss Eager had finished speaking, he said, "Miss Eager, I hope that you won't be very much frightened because what you saw in your dream last night was an incident which occurred in a town of Northern Italy where His Majesty, King Humbert, was assassinated at precisely the hour that the Empress entered your room and in that manner that you describe in your dream." Miss Eager, like a flash, remembered the picture she had seen of the late King of Italy and it was the man whom she had seen enter the carriage followed by the officer in uniform! As the Tsar told her this, he held in his hand a telegram which had just been received detailing the news of this assassination.

On one occasion, the Empress told Miss Eager that all her life she had been much interested in the spiritual world, but that she had come to the conclusion that it was wrong to meddle with such things because if there was anything in it, it must come from the devil.

Early one evening, the Empress entered the nursery and told the children that she was going to dinner and would probably be very late, consequently would not come in to see them on her return, as was her wont. There was going to be a séance after the dinner. The next day, Miss Eager took occasion to ask Her Majesty if she had enjoyed the séance. The Tsaritsa proceeded to tell her all about a clairvoyant called Philippe but with a note of bitterness in her recital, for she said that Philippe had mesmerised her husband and made him do exactly what he told him. The Empress steadfastly refused to see Philippe after that. Just what occurred at this séance, the Empress never did say, at least to Miss Eager, but it was quite clear to her that Her Majesty had been unfavourably impressed and that she would have nothing more to do with the mysterious Frenchman. Considerable pressure was brought to bear upon the Empress by various ladies of the Court to persuade her to go once more to Philippe, but she never would do it.

These incidents indicating this phase of the Tsaritsa's character are, of course, sympathetically interpreted by Miss Eager because she, herself, be-

lieves so absolutely in the spirit world, in dreams and intuitions.

For example, before Port Arthur was beseiged, Miss Eager in a dream saw its fall and told the Empress about it. The Empress afterwards reminded her of this dream and deeply regretted that the Tsar had not taken counsel from Miss Eager's vision rather than from Philippe.

On another occasion, Miss Eager told Mary, the nurse, to go and tell a certain lift-man in the Palace that he was not to work that day as, in a dream, she had seen him terribly crushed and mangled, but Mary laughed and refused to convey the message. Miss Eager thought it seemed rather foolish and so did not insist upon sending the message to the man. That afternoon, when she returned from the daily drive with the Grand Duchesses, the Empress sent for her and said, "Miss Eager, this morning, you told Mary to warn the lift-man not to work to-day and Mary refused to carry your message." Miss Eager said, "Yes, that is true." "Well," said the Empress, "I sent for you because I wanted to tell you myself that while you were out with the children, the lift-man was killed."

Another curious incident which is hard to explain occurred at the time of the death of Princess Ella, a daughter of the Grand Duke of Hesse, a charming child of seven years, who succumbed to an illness of only 36 hours' duration,—apparently ptomaine poisoning. The child was staying at the time with her Royal uncle and aunt, the Tsar

and Tsaritsa at the Palace in Poland. While the child was ill, and just before her life spark was extinguished, two of the Russian Grand Duchesses, Olga and Tatiana, who were sleeping together in a neighbouring room, suddenly began to scream frantically. The Empress, the physicians in attendance upon Princess Ella and Miss Eager rushed into the room where the children were and saw them standing in their beds and shrieking in terror. It was long before they could be pacified and then they told how they had seen a strange man with flowing robes and great wings, walk through their room. While they were still telling of the fearful apparition, the eyes of both the children suddenly became dilated with terror and both of them simultaneously pointing in the same direction, cried, "Look! Look! There he is again. Don't you see him? He is going into Ella's room. Poor Ella! Poor Ella!" Of course, none of the adults could see anything and the physicians assured the Empress that it was but an attack of childish hysteria which had suddenly and strangely come upon both children. Only a few moments later, the Empress and the physicians were hurriedly summoned to the bedside of the dying child who, lapsing into a state of coma, died in the Tsaritsa's arms. To this day, the Empress, as well as the Emperor and Miss Eager, are convinced that the children actually saw this Angel of Death passing into the room of the dying Princess. At least, it is true that there are many similar inex-

plicable cases on record of children and sometimes of animals, as well as of dying persons, having supernatural vision at moments of death. Horses, for example, have been known to become terror-stricken when passing the scene of a murder, while the well-known death-rap is of such common occurrence that there can be no doubt of its existence.

These incidents are related in order to explain much that is otherwise inexplicable in the character of the Tsaritsa. The mental development which she has experienced through her entire life has been logical and in natural sequence. Her early philosophical and theological interests have simply been developed abnormally in the abnormal environment in which she has lived. While the Empress has been ever sceptical when conversing with her friends and reluctant to accept as reality, manifestations of the spirit world, there can be no doubt that both she and the Emperor have nevertheless been secretly convinced that they are both instruments of God as well as possessing the power of holding converse with the spirit world.

This is proved by the canonisation of Seraphim, the parish priest of Tambov, whose tomb they visited prior to the birth of the heir, Alexis Seraphim had been dead seventy years, but the Tsar, anxious to leave no stone unturned to procure a son and heir, encouraged by the Tsaritsa, insisted upon the canonisation of Seraphim. When the remains of the old priest were unearthed, it was found that the body was badly decomposed,

and to canonise a man whose body yields to the influence of decomposition is contrary to the traditions and customs of the Church. Orthodox Bishop Dmitry of Tambov made bold to call attention to this fact and protest the canonisation of Seraphim. For his temerity, the Tsar, deeply angered, ordered that Dmitry be deprived of his see and exiled to Viatka. According to Emperor Nicholas, the preservation of bones, hair and teeth were sufficient qualification for saintship. Furthermore His Majesty was upheld in this by various sycophant but prophetic monks, who, with sublime assurance, allowed that God will one day work a miracle and restore Seraphim's body. So Seraphim was canonised with great pomp and ritualistic solemnity. If anything were needed to fasten the belief of the Tsar and Tsaritsa in these extreme forms of religion it was the patent answer to their faith and trust in Philippe and Seraphim.

The boy was called Alexis and he was born on July 30, 1904, according to the Russian calendar, and since that time, Tsar and Tsaritsa have been given more and more to spiritualistic religion.

CHAPTER VI

FAMILY LIFE AT THE RUSSIAN COURT

Of recent years, since the war with Japan and the revolutionary outbreak in 1905-6, few court functions have been held. In the ordinary daily routine the Tsaritsa prefers to breakfast alone, to lunch with only one lady-in-waiting and the Emperor with but one adjutant. The dinners are likewise simple as often as is possible. The older children are brought in for meals when there are no guests. The tastes of both Tsar and Tsaritsa are equally simple as to food and to dress. The Tsar's favourite uniform is that of Colonel of one of his regiments, except in the summer, when he frequently appears in hunting costume—an English Norfolk jacket, knee trousers and leggings or high boots.

English is the language generally used by the Royal Family when alone,—English and German. The Tsaritsa speaks Russian quite correctly, but with a marked German accent. This is not strange in view of the fact that she did not begin to study the language until after her betrothal. Like most Germans, she speaks French poorly and consequently French has never been a popular language

with them, although the Tsar speaks it most excellently well.

Because English is used so much by the Emperor and Empress it is the popular language in court circles and among officers. Many Russians send their children to England when they are very young in order that English may be their first language. I have known many Russians who spoke English absolutely perfectly; fluently and without the slightest trace of foreign accent. The children of the Tsar and Tsaritsa use English most.

The Tsaritsa's voice is low and deep, not unmusical. Her laugh is light, usually breaking into a silvery falsetto. She is slightly taller than the Tsar, being about five feet eight and one-half inches, while he is barely five feet eight inches. Her face still wears an expression of soft, wistful beauty, which is enhanced by a small mole near the corner of her mouth. It is so small that it frequently is not noticed at all, but if one stands near her it is observed and not unpleasantly.

Miss Eager relates an incident which reveals the curious stolidity not to say cold-bloodedness of the character of the Empress. The Empress had gone to the christening of a battleship at St. Petersburg and returned to the Palace at St. Petersburg in the evening. In the nursery the Empress told Miss Eager how the officers of the ship had been drawn up in line for the ceremony when a sudden thunderstorm had descended and a peculiarly vivid flash of lightning had struck a flagstaff nearby, shat-

tering as it fell and striking some of the officers. One man rolled right to the feet of the Empress and her dress had been splashed with blood. The Dowager Empress had fainted at this sight, but the Empress herself insisted that the man had died in the service of his country and that consequently it was not a matter for mourning!

Of late years, the health of the Empress has been decidedly shattered. During the summer of 1910, the Tsar took her for a long holiday to Germany. She visited her childhood home of Darmstadt and later took a cure at a watering-place known for its beneficial effects upon people suffering from nervous and heart disorders.

During the summer of 1907 when the Imperial Family were holidaying on the yacht, *Standart,* off the islands of Finland, there was an attempt to do away with the entire family, the full details of which have never leaked out into the broad world. It is known, however, that this attempt was the result of a conspiracy which included some of the officers and men of the Royal yacht. The shock which the Empress sustained at that time, she has never recovered from and more or less sensational rumours are frequently given to the world suggesting the precarious condition of her mind as well as of her nerves.

From this extraordinarily exclusive family life, which is at present the rule at Peterhof and Tsarskoe-Selo (the two places where the Imperial Family spend most of their time) the Tsar has

come to be spoken of among the Grand Dukes and people of the court as "The Little Married Man." This phrase is indicative of the supercilious way that family life is regarded in Russia. Americans are frequently horrified at the nonchalant way that Russian nobles flaunt their mistresses about the streets and public restaurants of St. Petersburg.

The Tsar, as a young man, was probably as fast as any of his court, but after his marriage he settled down wonderfully. Whether he still has his wayward periods, as gossip sometimes asserts, I do not know. On the whole he is a good husband and a fond father. He undoubtedly appreciates the tremendous love the Tsaritsa pours upon him.

The attitude of the Tsaritsa toward the education of the Russian people will seem somewhat extraordinary to Americans, though after all it is probably consistent with her life. In this, as in everything else, she accepts the attitude of her liege and lord, the sovereign of the Russian people. When a certain Count Tolstoy (not the late Leo Tolstoy) was Minister of Public Instruction he once appealed to the Empress to aid him in extending the educational advantages of the Empire to the girls and young women of the country. (I have Count Tolstoy's own permission to relate this incident.)

The Tsaritsa listened to the Minister attentively as he set forth the needs of Russia in this direction, and when he had concluded she replied that she thought all young girls should be taught to sew,

to care for their homes, in short, to become helpful wives and good mothers, but as for granting them the privileges of so-called "higher education," knowledge of history, philosophy and the sciences —to this she was entirely opposed. "Because these studies, when offered to women, only result in such terrible times as Russia is now passing through."

This, surely, is a remarkable tribute to the women of Russia, the Tsaritsa holding them responsible for the movement toward liberty and freedom, as a result of their contact with education and culture!

On the other hand, the Tsaritsa sometimes generously encourages the extension of school opportunities to individual girls whose efforts happen to have been brought to her attention. For example, Miss Eager, who for six years was governess to the little Grand Duchesses, and who probably saw as much of the Tsaritsa during those years as anyone ouside of the Royal Family has ever seen, relates this anecdote, which I repeat with particular gladness, because it is one of the few of the kind that I have heard concerning Her Majesty.

"This story was told me by the Empress herself," says Miss Eager. "One morning there arrived on the train from the Caucasus, a little girl aged eleven. She approached a station porter and asked to be sent to the Minister of Education. The porter was greatly astonished and hesitated as to what he should do. Then the child said with oldish

solemnity, 'I have come from the Caucasus, a seven days' journey, to be put to school; you must please get me a droshky and send me to his house.' So the porter called a carriage and directed that she be driven to the Ministry of Education. Arriving there she had great difficulty in gaining admission to the Minister, but the doorman finally consented to tell the Minister that a little girl from the Caucasus desired to see him.

"The Minister was occupied at the moment, with a Secretary of the Empress, but the latter was interested in the message and the child was ushered into the office. The little girl bowed to the two dignitaries and proceeded to relate her case. The Minister appeared greatly amused and told the child she must return to her home, as he had no vacancy. But the little girl was persistent and soon showed that she had no idea of returning so easily to her distant home across the Empire. 'You are Minister of Education,' she exclaimed, 'and I have come all the way from the Caucasus to St. Petersburg to be put to school. You *must* put me somewhere.' The Minister, though puzzled, was beginning to be impressed. At last the Empress's Secretary begged that the child be cared for until there was a vacancy in one of the schools patronised by the Tsaritsa. These schools are few in number and are very exclusive. A note was thereupon written by the Minister to the Mistress of one of these schools and the little girl was sent to her under escort of a footman. The joy of the child was un-

bounded and she could scarcely express her gratitude to the Minister.

"The Secretary went that afternoon to Peterhof and related the incident to the Tsaritsa herself. The Empress asked that an inquiry be made immediately and the truth of the child's story substantiated. The investigation showed that the two older sisters of the child had been admitted to a local school, but there was no room for her. She took this greatly to heart and fretted over it until at last she determined to get a schooling anyway. She appealed to friends, to the local priest and the doctor, and all of their combined efforts to reconcile her to the 'Will of God' proved futile. At last, to pacify her, they subscribed enough money for a ticket to the capital, and the child set forth on her long journey all alone.

"When the Empress heard the story in detail, her heart was touched and she commanded that place be made for her in one of her own schools. The child is there to-day, receiving careful instruction, and enjoying the direct patronage of the Empress."

The Empress really loves all children, and in spite of the coolness which exists between her and her court, all children are fond of her. On the name day of each of her own children, she takes a long drive with the child whose celebration it is, and this event is much looked forward to by them all. Whatever leniency may be exercised in correcting the capricious whims of Alexis, I believe

that she is a strict mother with all of her daughters.

The Empress has few recreations. Owing to the fact that she rides badly she practically never rides for pleasure. Because of her disposition she has few, if any, real confidantes and intimate friends among the ladies of the Court. She has ladies-in-waiting—several hundred of them—but these are chiefly for formal occasions, and of her own choice she has but one near her at a time and different ladies are chosen for brief periods. Evenings she and the Emperor choose to retire to their private apartments and if she has no guests she reads aloud to him, not infrequently from English newspapers or an English novel.

The Tsar is fond of cards. The game of wint, a gambling game much played all over Russia, is a favourite of his, and he usually plays for high stakes, much enjoying the zest that the gambling element lends to the game. The Tsaritsa, on the other hand, is fond of the camera, and enjoys photography immensely. The children have few playmates apart from their own family and sometimes Royal cousins, children of one or another of the Grand Dukes, or one of the Royal relatives of their own mother or father abroad.

The Princess Ella, daughter of the present Grand Duke of Hesse and brother to the Tsaritsa, was a playmate whom the little Russian Grand Duchesses adored up to the sad and untimely death of the German Princess. Being left most of the time to themselves, the children of the Tsar and

Tsaritsa enjoy joining their mother in her pastimes when it is possible, and photography is one of the things that they all can do together.

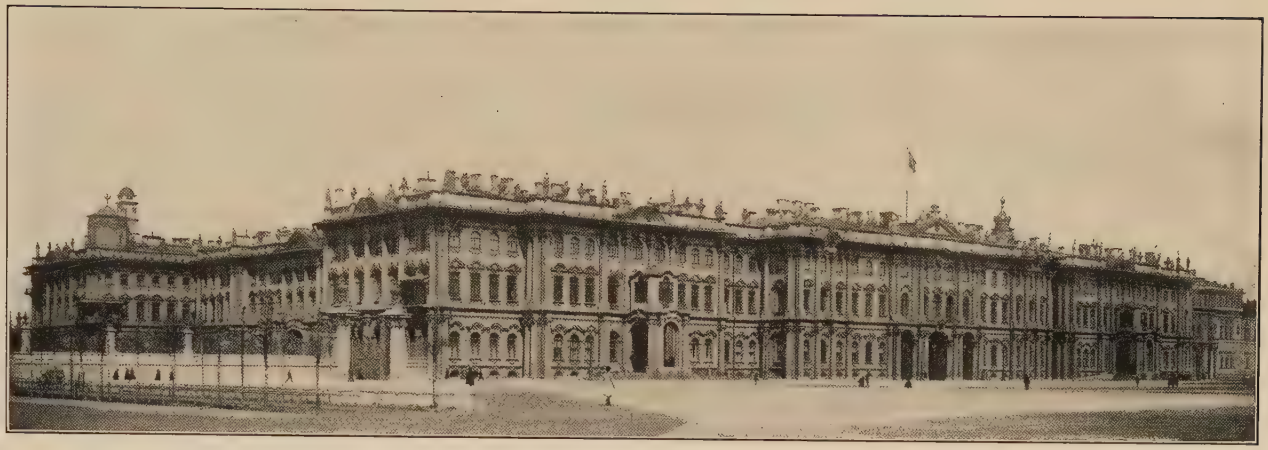
The Emperor has always done some shooting each year and is really fond of the sport. One morning a few summers ago he returned to the Palace quite fatigued, having been out all night after blackcock. Blackcock shooting is considered right good sport because the birds are so shy that it is difficult to get near them, and indeed, it is only at certain times of the year that they can be shot at all. On the morning that I refer to the Empress greeted the Royal sportsman and turning to a friend said: "Blackcock can only be shot at the mating season, when the males are pouring forth their song in deaf and blind rapture." Could anything be more cruel than to kill them at such a time?

In the summer the Tsaritsa is fond of sailing in and out among the Finnish wherries, but this annual outing is for two or three weeks only. Previous to "Bloody Sunday" in January, 1905, the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg was occupied, but since that fateful day the two outlying palaces only have been used. This has been a disappointment to Grand Duchess Olga, who always loved the Winter Palace and often expresses the wish to "live there all the time." The Winter Palace is the largest building in Europe and is a marvel in appointments. It contains rarest malachites and jaspers, rich paintings, gifts galore that have been

showered upon other Tsars, priceless jewels, and wonderful carved furniture. Besides the great rooms of state, salons and banquet rooms, suites of residence, libraries, offices, and vast halls that are now used as public museums, are beautiful winter gardens, great conservatories rich in tropical plants, rare ferns and orchids, blossoming plants exuding fragrance, and among the forest of greenery hang many cages of singing birds. In the centre of these winter gardens are pools of water in which gold fish sport, and at times pretty fountains play into these pools.

Whenever I have been in this wonderful palace I have felt as if I were wandering through a dream world. Several times I have been through portions of this palace and each time I have felt a new thrill of unreality.

The occasion of my first visit was when the Tsar received the members of the first Duma, the occasion when I first saw the Tsaritsa, the Dowager Empress and the little Grand Duchesses. The Tsar had commanded all of the grand dames of the Court to appear in full court costume, and the result was a scene of unparalleled splendour, a spectacle imposing beyond imagination. The Throne Room and halls that were in use that day suggested scenes from the magnificent days of the Empire of France when beautiful women and emblazoned, uniformed men arrayed themselves in costumes of glittering splendour. The old Russian court costumes which were worn in the Winter Palace that



THE WINTER PALACE, THE SCENE OF "BLOODY SUNDAY."

day were quite as splendid as any the French ever conceived even in the days of greatest pomp and show.

On another occasion I was received at the Winter Palace by a well-known and powerful nobleman of the Court, who has been close to the Empress for many years in the dual capacity of high functionary and friend. He is one to whom my high thanks are due for some of the material contained in these articles, for he not only told me some of the anecdotes which are here related, but he verified much of the material that I had collected from other persons and sources.

Peterhof is the favourite residence of the Tsaritsa and four of her five children were born there. One of the several buildings of this palace boasts a charming romantic history. About half a century ago when the first Nicholas was soon to be Emperor of Russia, he paid a visit to the German court. During the visit a tournament was held and Nicholas, then a Grand Duke, acquitted himself with honour. At the close of the tournament the victors rode past and close under a balcony, where were seated the ladies of the court and the Royal Family. A young Prussian Princess tossed a wreath of roses which the Russian Grand Duke caught on his sword.

The incident proved the beginning of an attachment which culminated in their marriage. Some years after, when the Grand Duke had become Emperor, he bought the great park of Peterhof and

built a palace for his Empress. Remembering the incident of the wreath of roses, at the tournament at the Prussian court, the device of a sword and a wreath of roses was made the predominant decorative figure of the palace. You may see it there to-day. Now as then, Peterhof belongs to the ruling Empress. Tsarskoe-Selo is an Imperial residence belonging to the government. Both of these palaces are within an hour of St. Petersburg.

Any visitor may stroll through the outer gardens and adjoining parks of the palaces and at any time one may meet the Tsaritsa or the Grand Duchesses driving or riding. The Tsar is the only real prisoner of the family, although Alexis, the four-year-old heir, is jealously guarded.

The Tsaritsa rides badly. Despite the fact that she is commander and "honorary Colonel" of at least two cavalry regiments she does not sit a horse well and never rides for pleasure. In this respect she is very unlike many modern Queens, notably the Empress Elizabeth of Austria, who was a marvellous horsewoman, possessing that rare hypnotic influence over the most spirited horses that the animals themselves are quick to recognise and yield to. It is only on such occasions as a review of one of her own regiments that the Tsaritsa mounts a horse. Ordinarily she drives—in summer in an open carriage, and generally unescorted.

The children may from time to time be seen playing about the lawns with a favourite pony, or driving in little wicker-work carts. They are as

full of frolic as any little girl in America, and in the nursery and the household apartments of the palaces they are as ingenuous, as irrepressible and often quite as embarrassing as any children we all know. Royal manners, at least in the children, are no different from manners of other people, and the daughters of even an Emperor and Empress have sometimes to be rebuked quite as severely as any children the world over.

The Tsaritsa dresses very plainly. Richly often, but in general effect simple. The Court has never approved her clothes, chiefly, I think, because of her inability to wear good clothes well. As a child she dressed in the utmost simplicity and the habit has remained with her. At certain court functions etiquette prescribes her costume. When she dons court dress known as Old Russian, she has merely to wear elaborate clothes that have been described in detail for her generations ago. It is when she dons costumes for everyday wear that she fails to please a fastidious court.

The average American girl very naturally thinks of the clothes of the Tsaritsa of Russia with a combined feeling of awe and interest, with just a little of envy creeping in. Imagine having all the money you want to spend on your clothes and being able to wear jewels valued at millions of dollars. And, of course, the American girl wants to know all the details of the Tsaritsa's wardrobe, and how many hats and dresses she has each season, and how much they cost.

It may be a disappointing fact, but it is nevertheless true, that the Tsaritsa just hates the thought of clothes, and though her costumes are of expensive fabrics, they never have any chic individuality of their own, for the very good reason that she cares so little about them. Of course, she does her shopping in Paris, but she does it by proxy. One of the Ladies-in-Waiting is commissioned to buy each season her gowns and her hats and all the other little details appropriate for a Tsaritsa's wardrobe, in Paris, but many times when they reach the Tsaritsa, she discards them with the expression, "Indeed, that is perfectly lovely and very Frenchy, but it would never do for me at all."

The corsetiere in Paris who makes the Tsaritsa's stays has troubles of her own, for the Tsaritsa utterly refuses to change her figure to suit the ever-changing modes. Her waist is growing large of late, according to the Parisian idea of a fashionable figure, but this doesn't trouble the Tsaritsa as much as it would trouble many women in America.

For everyday wear her gowns are all of the plainest, but, of course, there are occasions when she must wear regal robes. Her court costume is a magnificent creation of the richest satin elaborately trimmed with heavy embroidery. Masses of the embroidery are used, while the corsage is laden with jewelled trimming. The buttons which trim this court costume are each one of them worth a small fortune. They consist of a large pearl in a wonderfully artistic setting. The Tsaritsa's pearls,

which she wears with her court costume are famous the world over.

It is no wonder she has all of these magnificent things, for in addition to the hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of gifts that she has herself received from her subjects and from fabulously rich kings, princes and potentates of the East and Central Asia, she has at her disposal jewels that belong to the Russian Crown—gifts to other Empresses, and Emperors, far back, perhaps for several hundred years.

Sometimes she wears drop-earrings of matched pearls, which are marvellously valuable, and her dog collar and necklace and corsage pin, also of pearls, have a value of millions of dollars. The Tsaritsa is always glad when the time comes for her to take off her court costume. The long, heavy train is a burden to her. She is very partial to light-in-weight gowns.

Many of her dresses are of the lingerie order, consisting of lace and fine nainsook.

Yet, on the other hand, she has many house gowns and cloaks of velvet, trimmed with rare laces. Perhaps, of all her jewels, she cares most for a long string of wonderful pearls, which she wears very often. The string is so long that she can wear it twice around her neck, and yet have the longest loop reach to her knees. The short loop comes to the waistline, and is finished with one single pear-shaped pearl of enormous value.

All the children's clothes are made according to

the Tsaritsa's idea, and simplicity is their key-note. The children are very apt to wear white entirely, and the four little girls are dressed exactly alike. Their hair is arranged in the same way, too, brushed straight back from their foreheads. Of course, the finest of materials is used in making their clothes, but the design is always extremely simple. Their christening costumes were all made alike, even the small boy's this time. They were of the sheerest of white mull with exquisitely fine lace insertions. The little dresses had short sleeves and were cut out round at the neck, and tied on the shoulders with white ribbon, having long, silk fringe. The shoulder bows were the dress-up touch, the touch which is so seldom seen in any of the costumes worn by the Tsaritsa's children.

The young man of the family is also usually dressed in white, and though his little Russian suits come from Paris, they are strictly plain in design, generally of heavy white linen, and trimmed with bands of embroidery.

All these little details may be commonplace, but they are perhaps all important when we are trying to analyse the character of the Tsaritsa through her tastes.

CHAPTER VII

THE GRAND DUCHESS OLGA

THE effect of the war upon the children of the Tsaritsa caused much pain to their gentle English governess, Miss Eager, who relates the following experience: "It was very sad to witness the wrathful, vindictive spirit that the war raised in my little charges. One of the illustrated papers had a picture of the baby children of the Crown Prince of Japan. Marie and Anastasie came running across to see the picture, and wanted to know who those queer little children were. I told them, and with a look of hatred coming into her sweet face Marie slapped the picture with her open hand. 'Horrid little people,' said she; 'they came and destroyed our poor ships and drowned our sailors.'" Miss Eager then explained to the little Grand Duchess that it was not these children who had done this terrible thing, because they were only babies and could not possibly fight. But Marie answered obstinately, "Yes; those little babies did it. Mamma told me the Japs were all only little people!"

Olga, as usual, was yet more bitter toward the Japanese. One day she opened up vituperatively: "I hope the Russian soldiers will kill all of the

Japanese; not leave even one alive." Her teacher tried to explain that there were many little children and women in Japan, who had nothing whatever to do with the war and could not fight under any circumstances. Would it be good, she asked of Olga, for the Russian soldiers to kill these too? The child was thoughtful for a moment, then asked: "Have they an Emperor in Japan?" "Yes, certainly," the teacher answered. Olga then asked several more questions, and finally remarked: "I did not know that the Japs were people like ourselves. I thought they were only like monkeys."

Olga, like so many children, who are the oldest in a family, has always been a handful. About Marie, and Anastasie, and Tatiana too, for that matter, are many pretty little stories of charming childish ways, but almost every anecdote I heard of Olga was when she had been up to some mischief, or disobedient, or stubborn, or quick of temper. One or two of these stories, however, are interesting and show that even the mother task of an Empress's life is very much like every mother's life, and especially in the case of the Tsaritsa who has ever undertaken so much more personal care of her children than most Queens—and one may even say, than many mothers right here in this land.

One day, before the outbreak of the war, when Olga was quite a little girl, she was taken for a drive with her nurse along the Nevsky Prospect, the principal street in St. Petersburg. The little Grand Duchess simply would not behave. She

was continually jumping up and attracting the attention of people along the streets, and as it was that time in the afternoon when the Nevsky is crowded, this meant pretty much the attention of all St. Petersburg.

Suddenly the child dropped back into her seat and sat bolt upright as quiet as you please, her hands folded demurely in her lap. After a moment she turned to her nurse and said: "Did you see that policeman?" The nurse replied she had, but there was nothing extraordinary about a policeman on the street. "But this one was writing something," pursued Olga. "I am afraid he was writing, 'I saw Olga and she was very naughty.' "

When the nurse replied that this was unlikely Olga reminded her, somewhat reproachfully, that a few days before they had seen a policeman arresting a woman who was under the influence of liquor, and when Olga had begged that the woman be let off the nurse had replied that the woman had been very naughty and deserved to be arrested, adding that one had to be very naughty indeed to be taken off by the policeman in that way.

The incident evidently made a deep impression upon the child, for no sooner had they got back to the Palace than Olga began to inquire if any policeman had been there for her. As soon as she could, she related the whole affair to the Tsar and the Tsaritsa and ended by asking her father if he had ever been arrested. The Emperor laughed and said he had never been quite naughty enough

for that, to which Olga exclaimed: "Oh! how very good you must always have been!"

A little while before this Olga had been naughty all day and her nurse said to her: "I am afraid you got out of bed with the wrong foot foremost this morning." Olga looked thoughtful for a moment but said nothing. The next morning, before getting out of bed she called to her nurse to ask which was the right foot for her to get out with. The nurse indicated one of her feet and Olga slowly descended upon it. "Now," she said, "that bad foot won't be able to make me naughty to-day." And all day, whenever Olga started to do things she ought not to do, the nurse had only to remind her that she had got out of bed with her right foot that morning, therefore she couldn't be contrary.

Tatiana's next youngest sister, the Grand Duchess Marie, one day caused a ripple of amusement in the same Winter Palace. She was looking out of one of the windows when a regiment of soldiers marched past, through the magnificent Winter Palace Square over which a colossal Angel of Peace broods, perched on a towering marble column. Suddenly Marie exclaimed, "Oh! I love these dear soldiers; I should like to kiss them all!"

One of the family who was standing near overheard the child's remark and said: "Marie, nice little girls don't kiss soldiers."

Marie made no reply, but a little later there was a children's party at the Palace, and among the guests were the children of the Grand Duke Con-

stantine. One of the boys, aged twelve, had just entered in the military school where high noblemen's sons are trained for the army—the *Corps de Pages*. This miniature officer arrived in his brand new uniform and as he met his cousin Marie he made to kiss her. But Marie sprang away, covering her mouth with her hand. "Go away, soldier," she cried. "I don't kiss soldiers—nice little girls don't kiss soldiers."

Her cousin was so well pleased at being taken for a real soldier that he readily forgave his dignified little cousin for declining his proffered kiss.

Tatiana and Marie have always been sweet children, and, on the whole even tempered if mischievous. Olga, however, the eldest, has never been so popular. In 1899, when Olga was four years old the Royal Family (which then included only three children), went to Moscow for a brief sojourn. While there the Empress decided to have portraits painted of the three children.

The artist who was entrusted with this commission began to take innumerable photographs of them all. This was preliminary to the sittings. The sittings proved tedious and tiresome and after the fourth or fifth sitting Grand Duchess Olga quite lost her patience and her temper, and at last exclaimed to the artist: "You are a very ugly man and I don't like you a bit."

To the amusement of several members of the Imperial Household the artist was much hurt by this Royal comment, and offended as well. He even

ventured to resent the child's outburst. "You are the first lady who has ever said I was ugly, and moreover, I'm not a man—I'm a gentleman," he replied.

Ladies of the Court were always loath to talk about Olga. "She is cranky," said one. "She is not nice," said another. And one grand lady of honour went so far as to shrug her shoulders and say: "She is like her mother!" When I pressed this and begged her tell me more, the lady merely referred to the haughty, disdainful manner of the Empress. I think I have explained this attitude as I have understood it.

The Empress received very little sympathy and consideration from the ladies of her Court from her first coming to Russia, and she soon came to hold her head high and walk heedless through the throng. She apparently gave no effort to winning friends but accepted the atmosphere which circumstances and an obstinate Court created for her. Perhaps the consciousness of her lack of popularity wore upon her, and rasped. That wide popularity of the Dowager Empress, and her lack of cordiality toward her young successor doubtless tended to further develop the very qualities that have been her bane. At all events her disposition toward most of the people of her Court has never been happy, and their silent resentment of her coolness has driven her more and more into herself, to the consolations of religion, and her family.

One Lady-in-Waiting, for example, told me that

she had been attached to the person of the Empress from time to time for a number of years. She herself is a Princess of old family and in excellent standing at Court. One day, when the Grand Duchess Olga was three years old the Princess and the child were together in one of the nursery rooms. The Princess stood with her back to one of the walls and Olga came toddling across the room as fast as her little legs would carry her. The Princess stretched out her arms, caught up the child and lightly tossed her ceilingwards, then bringing her slowly down toward her own upturned face, kissed her and set her down. At that moment the Empress entered the room. She had no sooner seen this very natural action on the part of her own Lady-in-Waiting than she exclaimed: "The most you may do is to kiss the hand of my daughter!"

St. Petersburg is full of similar gossiping incidents concerning the Empress. Many of them are doubtless fabricated, as many such anecdotes always are concerning people who occupy conspicuous positions in the world, but the one I have just related is true, and all of these anecdotes possess the virtue that they are likely—that they *may* be true.

One concluding anecdote of the Grand Duchess Olga is vouched for. One day a professor from Moscow was giving the Grand Duchess Olga a lesson in history. A Lady-in-Waiting was sitting by, as usual, to insure that no dangerous doctrines are taught. Suddenly Olga looked up at her

teacher and asked: "Who is Emperor of France?" The professor felt that this was an embarrassing question, for it was as yet far too early to undertake the explanation of a republican system of government. The Lady-in-Waiting, however, was equal to the occasion, for seeing the embarrassment of the professor, she answered, "In France the Emperor is called *President!*"

CHAPTER VIII

TATIANA, MARIE AND ANASTASIE

THE Grand Duke Vladimir was wont to call the Grand Duchess Marie "The Amiable Baby," and from all accounts she is more like what her mother was in babyhood than any of the children. Between her and her older sister Olga is a world of difference. If half the stories about her are true she is indeed the personification of sweetness and unselfishness.

Whooping cough attacked the whole nursery one spring. Curiously enough the Empress came down first and it quickly spread to all of the children. Even the nurses caught it. One day one of the nurses was holding the baby, Anastasie, on her lap. The little thing was coughing and choking toward the whoop of relief when Marie ran up close to her, and putting her face close up to her little sister's said: "Baby, darling, cough on me." The nurse asked her why she desired that and she answered: "I am so sorry to see my dear little sister so ill, and I thought if I could take it from her she would be better." A charmingly generous impulse, surely!

Marie is so frequently held up as a model and an example to the other three sisters that she has been

nicknamed the "stepsister." Her amiability and sweetness are so marked that her sisters are ready to admit that she cannot be more than half one of them!

There is a pretty little story current of a nursery incident which occurred one afternoon when the little Grand Duchesses were playing house by piling up chairs. The other sisters entered into a conspiracy against Marie. "You were to be the footman and wait outside," they told her. Marie was quite willing to be footman, but she protested against leaving the nursery and standing all by herself in the hall. But the others pushed her out and it looked as if poor little Marie would have to submit. Suddenly she dashed into the nursery, her arms filled with toys and dolls' dresses. Rushing up to her sisters she dealt each a slap and cried out: "I'll not be a footman. I'll be the kind, good aunt who brings presents to the children."

She then proceeded to distribute her gifts, kissed each of her "nieces" and sat down. The other children looked sheepishly at one another, and at last Tatiana said: "We are too cruel to poor little Marie, she really couldn't help whipping us." And after that Marie played with the others in the nursery.

The children are frequently admitted to where their parents are at tea time, but they are not supposed to touch any of the cakes that are served to the older people. It is difficult to prevent this

always, for like all children, they want to sample the good things they see.

One day, when no one was noticing Marie particularly, she helped herself to some cake and began to gobble it down as fast as she could. With her mouth still full, she looked up at the nurse who came to take her and said: "Dere! I've eaten it all up. You tant det it now."

The Empress felt that Marie should be punished for this, so nurse was told to take her off to bed. But the Emperor intervened, saying that he had always feared Marie would be growing wings and he was glad to see that she was only a human child after all!

I remember one occasion when the Tsaritsa was covered with confusion by the little Grand Duchess Tatiana. The Crown Prince of Siam was visiting St. Petersburg and during part of his stay, he was a guest of the Emperor and Empress, who were then occupying the Winter Palace. The dusky Prince went to pay his respects to the nursery. The Empress herself accompanied him to present the children.

On the way they met Tatiana and the Empress called to her second daughter: "Come, Tatiana, and shake hands with this gentleman." Tatiana held off shyly, looking askance and with manifest disapproval upon the brown-skinned potentate from Siam. At last she exclaimed: "That is not a gentleman, mamma; that's a monkey!"

The Empress flushed with mortification and re-

torted: "You are a monkey yourself, Tatiana." The Prince laughed heartily at the incident and before the end of the visit of his Imperial Highness to Petersburg, he and Tatiana became fast friends.

Tatiana has always been a bright child, with an amusing, alert mind. One day she and her English governess were walking in the garden of the Winter Palace, when one of the Emperor's beautiful great collie dogs came bounding along the path behind them. With a puppy-like caprice the dog jumped on Tatiana's back and threw her down. As the little Grand Duchess clambered to her feet, the dog gamboled off down the path in a mad frolic with another dog. Tatiana was not hurt, but considerably frightened, and after gazing after the dogs for a moment in silence, great salt tears began to drop down her cheeks. The governess tried to comfort her by saying "Poor Sheilka, she did not mean to hurt you; she only wanted to say 'good morning' to you."

Tatiana looked up at her governess and quickly replied: "Was that all? Then I don't think she is very polite; she should have said it to my face, not to my back."

The Grand Duchess Tatiana is one of the sweetest of children. One day when she was being got ready to go out, the governess went to get her coat to go with them. When she returned, the nurse, Mary, was shaking Tatiana. "How dare you shake Tatiana?" Miss Eager exclaimed. "You are paid to take care of her,—not to correct her." "She is

paid?" said Tatiana in surprise. "Yes," the governess replied, "She is paid and I, also, am paid," at which Tatiana put her head on the shoulder of the governess and cried. "You have seen me get my money every month," said the governess. "I always thought it was a present to you," the child said. The governess then explained that it was necessary that she be paid, as she had no money of her own and that her way of earning money was looking after the Royal children. The next morning when the governess awoke, Tatiana was standing by her bedside and she said, "May I get into your bed?" As the little Grand Duchess cuddled down in the arms of her governess, she exclaimed, "Anyway, you are not paid for this."

Another day, as the Royal nursery was going to the beach at Livadia after a terrible storm, the Grand Duchess Olga picked up a little dead bird which had fallen on the grass and said, "I will keep this poor, little bird forever." The governess did not interfere but watched Olga carry it, followed by Tatiana who was sympathetically interested. The governess wondered how long the children would carry this bird before getting tired of it. Presently, Olga said, "Perhaps I am doing wrong to take this little bird away because even at this moment, God may have sent an angel for the bird and what if it is not there? I am going to put it back." Whereupon, she retraced her steps to the spot where she had found it. The next day they were going to the beach again and they took the

same path as on the previous day in order to look for the bird. When they arrived at the spot where Olga had found and replaced it, the bird was gone. "Suppose we had taken it away!" said Olga. "Then God's angel could not have found it." "Oh," replied Tatiana, "I think it would have been perfectly lovely if He had taken it out of our hands!"

Anastasie has always enjoyed the reputation of being the most mischievous of all the children. One year, when the Dowager Empress was about to celebrate her birthday, all of the Imperial children were arranging their gifts for their grandmother. Anastasie, for reasons of her own, determined not to take any part in these arrangements or to select any gift for her grandmother. She refused even to learn a piece of poetry to recite to her as all the other children did. "At all events, she will take grandmamma a bouquet of lilies of the valley tied with a bow of mauve ribbon?" "O yes, I will gather a bouquet in the morning," replied Anastasie. The following day, all the children were dressed to go into the carriage to offer their congratulations to the Dowager Empress. Anastasie alone, appeared with empty hands. "I thought we were going to walk so that I could gather some wild flowers for grandma; now I shall have none." "When people go to offer congratulations, they go in carriages," their governess explained. Anastasie thereupon went to the cupboard and took a little toy from it.

When the nursery arrived at the Palace, the other children gave their grandmother gifts and recited their pieces of poetry until it came Anastasie's turn when she hung her head and all the other children turned away with shame and chagrin for their sister. "Have you nothing for grandma?" the Empress Dowager said. "Yes, I have brought this, Grandma," Anastasie replied. "But have you made nothing for me with your own little hands?" "Nothing, Grandma," was the answer. "Well, dear, you are a very little child," said the Empress Dowager, "but perhaps you have learned a piece of poetry to say to me." Anastasie looked more chagrined than ever, but, unwilling to confess her negligence, thought to deceive the Empress Dowager by repeating the following lines:

I have a pretty doll,
  Her name is Miss Rose,
She has two pretty blue eyes,
  And a very small nose.
She can't stand long,
  On her tiny little toes,
She just makes a curtsy,
  And then, off she goes.

"That is very pretty," said the Empress, "but isn't that what you said to your mother last week?" Anastasie couldn't stand it any longer and fled from the room and burst into tears, but presently she went back to her grandma to tell her how sorry she was and to beg her forgiveness. The Empress accepted the child's apology very sweetly, but told

her that she could not give her the bonbon like the one she had given to all the other children.

Anastasie, one day, climbed onto the nursery table and jumped off. The governess said, "You must not do that; it is too high; you can jump off the sofa if you want to jump, but not off the table." Paying no heed to what had been said to her, Anastasie again climbed on the table and jumped off. So her governess gently slapped her. Anastasie sat down and thought a moment, then said, "It is not nice to get a slap, but it is better to climb on the table and get a slap than to jump off the sofa and not get a slap," and she promptly climbed on the table once more and jumped again. The governess then tied her in a chair with a sash. Anastasie did not like this so she said, "It is better to climb on the table and get a slap but it is better not to climb on the table than to be tied in a chair like this."

The Emperor was with the children one day when Anastasie, in a burst of temper, slapped Tatiana on the face. The Emperor promptly sent for the nursery governess and told her to take Anastasie upstairs and make her hear reason. When the governess had Anastasie alone, she said, "Aren't you ashamed of yourself to slap your sister?" "I am not ashamed at all," replied Anastasie, "because I did not really hurt Tatiana." "But you hurt Tatiana's feelings," the governess told her, "and you hurt your father's feelings." "I did not hurt Tatiana so I won't say 'I am sorry' to her but

I am sorry I hurted poor daddy's feelings," and she proceeded to go and tell her father how sorry she felt. The governess allowed her to go downstairs. Anastasie went directly to the Tsar and said: "Daddy, I am sorry I hurted your feelings," but to Tatiana she would not say a word. After a moment, however, she suddenly threw her arms around her sister's neck and kissed her.

Anastasie had long wanted a cat for a pet. In the garden near Peterhof, where the Royal Family were staying for the annual manœuvres, the nursery, one day, found a cat following the gardener. Anastasie promptly said, "Sir, will you please give me your cat?" "You may have the cat if you can keep it," the gardener replied. Anastasie took the cat home, buttered its feet and shut it up in one of the rooms. When she went to look for her cat, she found it had escaped through the chimney. The next day, Anastasie went again to the garden and, seeking out the gardener, said, "You said I might have the cat and I took it home but she ran away." "No," said the gardener, "I said you might have the cat if you could keep it." Anastasie begged him to give her the cat again and to tell the cat that she was to stay with her, but the gardener was reluctant to give up his pet and so a kitten had to be found for Anastasie elsewhere.

One spring, the nursery was taken to an orchard near the Palace to pick apples, and, as a reward, they were promised some baked apples with their tea. When the baskets were filled, the apples were

sent to the Palace and the children were taken off to listen to a military band. While the band was playing, Anastasie suddenly produced an apple which she had hidden and began to eat it. The governess took it away from her and told her not to eat it, as it would make her ill. A few moments later, she produced another, and said to her governess, "If you take this apple away from me, I will scream and then the people will all think you are wicked to me." So the governess said, "Anastasie, as sure as you eat that apple, you will be punished when you get home." Anastasie was not frightened by the threat and calmly proceeded to eat the apple. When the nursery returned to the Palace, Anastasie was put straight to bed and at tea time, all the other children had baked apples but none was given her. The other children thought to tease her by asking her if she did not want some of their lovely baked apples. "No, indeed," remarked Anastasie, "because you don't know how good that apple was that I had in the garden." The next day, Anastasie wanted again to be taken to the orchard, but the governess took her somewhere where she did not want to go. Looking out of the carriage window, Anastasie said, "It is very lovely here; I am enjoying myself much more than in the orchard." The following day, she again asked to be taken to the orchard. Her governess asked her why she wanted to be taken there again and Anastasie, throwing her arms around the governess's neck, said: "Because it was such fun eating

that apple." Several days later, Tatiana said, "It is too bad because Anastasie was naughty that we cannot go to the orchard." The governess said, "Until Anastasie is good and will promise not to eat any more apples you cannot go." It was nearly a week after that before Anastasie's stubbornness was subdued and she promised to eat no more apples if the nursery might only go and play in the orchard.

From these stories, it will be seen that Anastasie is most like her Imperial father whose traditional stubbornness of character is well known.

CHAPTER IX

THE TSAREVITCH

ALEXIS, son and heir of Tsar Nicholas II and Tsaritsa Alexandra Feodorovna, was born July 30th (Russian style), 1904. When he was about an hour old, he was made honorary commander of six regiments of the Russian army.

When he was twelve days old he was taken to the Royal chapel at Peterhof in a gilded coach drawn by eight horses and christened. The name he bears, interpreted, means "Bringer of Peace." Yet at this time the Tsaritsa said: "We are bound to hand over to our son an Autocracy such as we ourselves received."

Here is one of the curious phases of her character. Born of an English mother, reared in Germany where at least the idea of a constitutional monarchy is accepted, she yet opposes the least step toward reform and progress in Russia, if it interferes with or threatens Autocracy. She acquiesces in the naming of her son "Bringer of Peace" at a time when nearly the whole nation is aspiring to freedom and almost ready to rise up in general revolution to fight for a constitution! It would seem that in this as in so many other things she learned to conform with the will of the Tsar, who

is her sole liege. The Tsar, two years later, said in private conversation to a friend of mine: "I believe Russia can go for twenty years more without a constitution."

As the Tsar speaks, so thinks the Tsaritsa. Whether this is one of the tragedies of her life, or whether it is her supreme sacrifice, one cannot judge. The fact remains, that every thought, every particle of her own *ego* has been put aside that she may be more completely the wife of her husband.

The little Alexis was started in life with a goodly array of godfathers and godmothers. Among the former were the King of England, the King of Denmark, the Emperor of Germany, and various Grand Dukes, uncles of the Tsar. During the baptismal service the baby Tsarevitch, when he was being anointed, raised a tiny pink hand and extended his fingers as if he were pronouncing a benediction or bestowing a blessing. And all the people present accepted this as a good omen of future blessings to come from the Heir to the Throne.

The training of a young Tsar does not conform with American ideas of training a child, for very largely the Tsarevitch is encouraged to do everything he is inclined to do on the theory that the instincts and impulses of an Autocrat must be right.

During the summer of 1907 I was in Finland when the Royal Family were cruising along the picturesque Finnish coast in the Royal Yacht *Standart,* and I gathered various stories of Alexis from

sailors and officers of the ship. On this cruise Alexis was the Emperor's adjutant, and by way of training, this three-year-old was placed in command of the squadron, that is to say, the Royal Yacht and the accompanying pilot boat, gunboats and other vessels that make up a Royal fleet when the Imperial Family goes for a summer outing.

One night in August when the air was still and warm, Alexis had difficulty in falling asleep. Suddenly he sat up in his little bed and announced that he desired the ship's band to come and play for him. The officer on duty explained that the hour was late and the band had retired, whereupon Alexis grew furious and *commanded* that the band be aroused and brought to him immediately, which was done. The Tsar on this occasion was inordinately pleased and exclaimed: "That's the way to bring up an Autocrat!"

On another occasion Alexis ordered all the Finnish pilots on the various ships to be brought before him. As the astonished and wondering Finns appeared on the deck of the *Standart* the baby commander shouted: "Zaorovo rebyata!" (Health children!) The Finns, not understanding Russian, were much bewildered and frightened, and Alexis, became exceedingly annoyed at their not understanding. So the Finns were hurriedly taught to respond: "Zdravie zhelayem vashe Imperatorskoye Vysochestvo"—("We wish you health, your Imperial Highness.")

The sailor who acts as orderly to the Tsare-

vitch on the *Standart* is called Stefan. He is of huge physique and is in attendance on the autocrat-in-process day and night. Up to the present time, Alexis has shown a greater fondness for this man than for anyone else. He insists upon his "big Stefan" taking part in nearly all of his games and it is quite clear that he considers Stefan as second only to his father in all the vast Empire. Morning and night, little Alexis in his prayers remembers Stefan but even Stefan has not been able to break his young charge of a certain military tendency which shows itself at the end of each of his prayers in a loud "hurrah" instead of an "Amen." Alexis is perfectly logical in this, for he says that the soldiers on parade always cry "Hurrah" when his father appears or when he ceases speaking and, consequently, it is right that his Heavenly Father should be greeted in the same way.

Early in the year 1909, the Emperor of China despatched a special embassy, headed by one of the Princes of the Royal Family in China, to St. Petersburg for the express purpose of conveying to the Tsarevitch Alexis a collection of wonderful Chinese toys. The Embassy also brought with it two wonderfully trained dwarf elephants. This embassy was sent in acknowledgment of a similar embassy which the Emperor of Russia had sent to China some time before conveying to the boy-Emperor of 400,000,000 of people, a toy railroad said to have cost more than fifty thou-

sand dollars and many elaborate and ingenious toys of Russian design. This toy railroad was similar to one that President Fallières of France had presented to the Tsarevitch on the occasion of his visit to the Russian Imperial family. This gift had pleased the Tsarevitch hugely and he immediately nicknamed the French president, "The trainman." The Tsarevitch, like the Royal children of Spain, has frequently been maligned in the Press of Europe and reported as being defective mentally. These stories, of course, are all nonsense, for, like the Spanish Princes, he is a sturdy, wholesome boy in every respect and takes the keenest interest not only in all the wonderful toys that are sent him by kings, emperors and eastern potentates but also in childish sports and games.

That Alexis has a mind of his own and a pretty keen one at that is illustrated in a story that the Tsar himself has repeated. It appears that one day, the Emperor was engaged with a council of Ministers when the little Alexis suddenly burst into the Cabinet room. Surprised at seeing his father surrounded by so large a group of dignitaries, he stopped and looked at them for a moment, then quietly said: "Good morning, brothers." The Emperor proceeded to point out to the Tsarevitch that it was not adequately respectful for so small a boy to address elderly gentlemen as "brothers." Alexis appeared a little embarrassed and with an obvious desire to correct his mistake, he said, "Very well; good morning, boys."

Probably no heir in Europe is being trained with greater care than young Alexis, for, unless something unforeseen occurs, he will one day be the ruler over 150,000,000 of people and, according to the will and wish of his father, he will perpetuate the traditions of the Tsars of old and rule the vast kingdom with all the rigid severity which has characterised the autocratic Tsars of Russia.

CHAPTER X

THE END OF THE ROAD

THE Tsaritsa's life has been lived out on the plane of the family, not of the Empress. She might have swayed vast power, she might have liberated or helped to liberate one hundred and forty millions of people from oppression and tyranny; and her name would have been enshrined in all hearts for generations. But she has chosen an humbler part. She has shrunk from the larger burdens of the opportunities presented to her, and accepted the quieter tasks of the home. This much we may say, it is a tragedy that circumstances have prevented her carrying both parts. But to have been the great Empress, she would have been obliged to sacrifice her love to a degree. Nicholas doubtless cares tremendously for her, but a man never loves as a woman loves. For a woman's joy is sacrifice, and the sacrifice of ambitions, of personal hopes and dreams, of ideas, of principles, is the greatest of all sacrifices. In proving herself the absolutely loving and loyal wife the Tsaritsa turned her back upon the opportunities fate gave her for moulding history by ameliorating the condition of humanity in her own vast sphere.

The Tsar must understand the attitude of the Court toward the Empress and the fact that she is not popular doubtless makes him endeavour the more to make their own little family circle happy. For after all, the really exclusive circle of an Emperor and his Empress and their children is very, very small.

In August 1907 when the Tsar returned from his meeting with the Kaiser at Swinemünde, the Tsaritsa went to greet him far down the Gulf of Finland in a Royal Yacht. Court etiquette merely required that she meet him at the pier upon his landing, and this effort of hers caused a good deal of comment at the capital and was accepted as another evidence of her love for him.

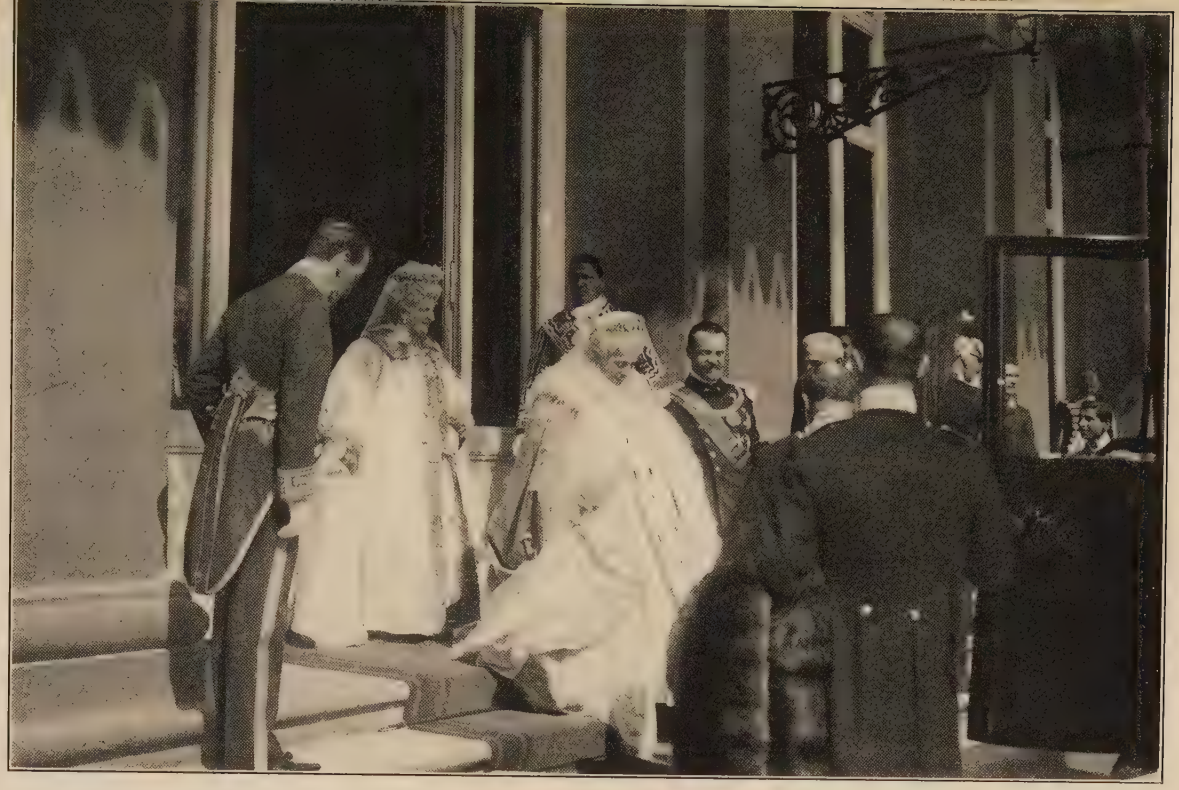
When the Tsar promised the nation a constitution—and a parliament—all might have been well had these promises been literally carried out. No sooner had the waves of revolutionary activity subsided, however, than the Emperor began to withdraw and nullify his honeyed promises and to take back piecemeal the constitution which had been granted in a moment of panic. Now the people feel that Russia will not have a real constitution nor a real parliament for years to come unless these institutions of liberalism and progress and civilisation are battled for. The government by maintaining a watchful grip on the country, by extraordinary vigilance, by arresting or exiling thousands upon thousands of citizens, women and girls

just as frequently as men, it is able to preserve a certain surface calm.

Of late public opinion in Russia, like public opinion in other countries, has been altering toward the Tsar. He is no longer the "weak," "well meaning little man," who is prevented from doing what he believes to be right by wicked Grand Dukes, bad ministers and a corrupt court. If he is ever "led" we know now that it is only in directions in which he desires to go. If his ministers are "bad," or the Grand Dukes "wicked," we know that the inclinations and ambitions of Nicholas II are toward Reaction, and that he aspires, in the words of the Tsaritsa, to "hand on to his successor an Autocracy such as he received."

We know, too, that however much local police and other officials may be directly responsible for a policy which uses massacre as a political weapon that the Tsar himself is not opposed to these methods, and that he directly patronises and encourages the "League of Russian men," popularly called "The Black Hundred." We know that the Tsaritsa, likewise, contributes money to support this organisation. This is the organisation that carries out the *pogroms* and the policy of governmental terrorism. In view of these (now) unquestioned facts, it seems passing strange that the Tsar has not sooner fallen a martyr to his own despotism. Scores of governors, generals, and other officials have paid the penalty for their misdeeds, but the Tsar has thus far been spared.

THE TSAR AND TSARITSA AT THE HEAD OF A REVIEWING PARTY.



FOUR GENERATIONS: THE PRINCE OF PIEDMONT, HIS FATHER THE KING, THE DOWAGER QUEEN MARGHERITA, AND HER MOTHER, THE DUCHESS OF GENOA.

There are good reasons for this, however. In the first place the person of the Tsar is constantly guarded, and to such an extent that it would doubtless be difficult for a mere fanatic to reach him. But the revolutionists could get him if they believed his death would serve the cause of Liberty. That the Tsar lives to-day is due solely to this doubt. The revolutionists have emissaries at court, in the palaces. It would not be difficult to carry out a death sentence passed upon him. But what would be the result of this? Who would be his immediate successor, that is, the Dictator pending the coming of age of Alexis?

The Russian liberals cannot forget that the assassination of Alexander II in 1881 instead of helping the Cause, set it back twenty years. It would be fatal to repeat such a blunder as that. And as to the Dictator—he might be any one of several Grand Dukes, and one or two of these would unquestionably be more aggressively tyrannical than the present Emperor. And while so much doubt prevails the life of Nicholas II is comparatively safe. On the other hand, if there is a desire to end the rule of the Romanoffs a much safer method would be to do away with the successors to the Throne. Such a proceeding would be unaccompanied by immediate political disturbance, and yet would be effective.

We can understand, therefore, the anxiety with which the Tsaritsa watches over Alexis. His birth was so long and so earnestly desired, and at least so

long as he is the only son any disaster overtaking him would be viewed as the most terrible of calamities—probably worse from the standpoint of the court than disaster to the Tsar himself. From the hour of his birth the Tsaritsa has taken it as her especial task to guard and protect her son from all dangers.

At Peterhof, at Tsarskoe-Selo, on the Royal Yacht, wherever Alexis goes the Tsaritsa is close beside. The little Grand Duchesses may sometimes be seen playing in the park at Peterhof accompanied by only their governesses and a groom, but if their brother is there too, so is the Royal mother. At functions, military reviews and the like, when Alexis is on exhibition to inspire the regiments with loyalty, the Empress always remains particularly near to her son.

The education of the children is supervised personally by the Tsaritsa. The instructors of the children of the Tsar have a very difficult task indeed. There are certain subjects in which the children must be thoroughly grounded, and certain others which must be taught eclectically and others which must be eschewed altogether.

I have a friend, now living in St. Petersburg, who was a court tutor for four years, and he has sometimes told me of the difficulties he encountered during that period. The Russian tutors generally have the rank of General, and are addressed in great formality as "Your Excellency." Teachers from abroad, however, appear in the Pal-

ace class-rooms in what we know as "evening dress." How strange it would seem to American boys and girls to go to school one morning and find the teacher wearing a low cut vest and long-tailed coat!

The two older children, Olga and Tatiana, inherit from their mother a fondness for music, and they both play quite well already. The Tsar enjoys listening to music, but he plays only by ear and never sings himself.

The end of the chapter is not yet. The Tsaritsa is still a young woman, and Empress of one of the most turbulent Empires on earth. The rank and file of her one hundred and fifty million subjects hold nothing against her but they are weary of the Romonoff régime. Militarism is now the last bulwark of the Empire. Martial law is spread over a large part of the Empire and the people are kept in subjection, in artificial quiet only through the constant menace of bayonets and prisons whose doors ever yawn to political heretics.

No one may prophesy the end, nor when it will come. The future is shrouded in complete mystery and therefore possesses incomparable fascination.

The Tsaritsa is still, by virtue of her position, one of the most powerful women in the western world, but whose life has been given to the natural development of the love of her school-girl days, at the expense of a career which might have rivalled that of the greatest heroines of history.

This is the story of the little German Princess, who was left motherless at six, and came unto her own through her heart's romance, and has remained faithful to this romance despite the tempting circumstances of Opportunity. The simple loving child who was called "Sunny" is to-day more than anything else the simple, loving wife of Nicholas II, the devoted mother of his children. Judging from her life, if she had the dearest will and wish of her heart it would be that she might be remembered as Wife and Mother, rather than as Empress. Thus the life of Princess Alix of Hesse—"Sunny"—passed into the Romance of an Empress—with its burdens and its sufferings and its tragedies, and thus the end of the road looks dark, uncertain and ominously fearful.

PART III
QUEEN ELENA OF ITALY

PART III

QUEEN ELENA OF ITALY

CHAPTER I

A MOUNTAIN PRINCESS

ON the eastern shores of the Adriatic, nestling between the unfamiliar Provinces of Herzegovina and Albania, lies the Kingdom of Montenegro. It is a tiny spot on the map and until very recently was rated as a Principality. The entire population of Montenegro would make only a small American city, yet the Montenegrans are a proud nation, with an engrossing and noble history, and perhaps no country in Europe has had a more romantic past. They are an aggressive people, these Montenegrans, always armed, ever ready to fight for the cause of freedom, a liberty-loving people, a staunch folk. The denizens of Montenegro have always been daring and bold; withal a poetic people. Nicholas, their Prince, is the first warrior in the kingdom and also the first poet. He is a picturesque figure, familiar to Europe and more or less known to America, for much has been written about him. Some years ago, some one had the temerity to inquire of Prince Nicholas, as he then was called, what were the exportations of Monte-

negro, to which question he gave answer, "My daughters."

The daughters of King Nicholas have indeed been a wonderful asset to this little nation. One married a Russian Grand Duke, thus securing the friendship of Russia. Another married a Servian, who at the present time reigns over that Kingdom. While another, Elena, married a Prince who presently became a King, making his spouse Queen of a great nation.

The story of the romance of the Montenegran Elena and the Italian Prince, son of the late King Humbert, and now known as King Victor Emanuel III, is one of the most romantic stories connected with the Court life of Europe. Princess Elena was the fourth child of King Nicholas, and she, perhaps more than any of the children, inherited many of her father's noble qualities.

Many times as I have watched her driving through the streets of Rome, deftly holding the reins and guiding the great black horses up and down the hilly, badly paved streets, or leisurely reposing in one of the magnificent Royal automobiles speeding up the Pincio or through the lovely gardens of the Villa Borghese, complacently acknowledging the salutes of the people, I have tried to fancy the little black-eyed Princess among her native hills—bounding like a chamois from rock to rock among the tallest crags and peaks, rejoicing in the high air, the free life, the glorious rapture that comes only to the mountain-born. In fancy I have

pictured her returning to her simple Cittenje home at night, her hands holding delicious bunches of Alpine flowers, her arms laden with flower branches. A strange girlhood this, for a future Queen. But so Elena lived as a child—naturally, spontaneously, freely.

And now—beside this fancy-memory I have to place a recollection of another phase of her life, when I saw her as Queen, in the midst of the horrors of Messina, nursing the wounded and comforting the dying. The night she was injured during a panic following one of the earthquake shocks I was standing on the deck of a ship lying so close to the Italian flagship that I could watch the wild rush of refugees across the decks, many of them to the rails as if to throw themselves into the sea. One afternoon I was on a British warship when Queen Elena came aboard to visit the wounded who were about to be conveyed to Naples. She spent more than an hour among the cots and stretchers and spoke a personal word to each and every one. All this was fine—a kind of work Queens rarely do. It was dramatic, too. For during the days immediately succeeding the first shock, earthquakes were constantly recurring and there were a hundred dangers to which all were exposed. But when we know of Queen Elena's early years we understand the instinct which took her so promptly to Messina, and we understand many of the other qualities which distinguish her from the other Queens of the world.

Elena's grandfather was called Prince Mirko, a name renowned in the history of Montenegro, for when Mirko was a very young man, long before he had become the idol of the Montenegran people, he was serving in a war against Turkey. One day Mirko and a comrade became detached from their regiment and fell into an ambush. The situation looked desperate. Pausing for an instant the two young officers made a vow that if they both survived the day, and eventually got back to their homes that they would one day seal their friendship and the memory of that experience, in blood. Some years later Mirko having married, became the father of a son whom he called Nicholas. When the boy Nicholas was seven years old, Mirko's old comrade of the Turkish war became the father of a daughter whom he named Melena. These two children became betrothed when Melena was still in her cradle and when she was only thirteen years old she and Nicholas were married. The fortune of life was so ordered that in time Nicholas became the ruler of the little principality, and Melena, his wife and consort, from the very first shared the responsibilities of administration with him. So complete a helpmeet has Melena been to Nicholas that from time to time when the Prince has of necessity quit Montenegro to visit his friend and ally the Tsar of Russia, or his son-in-law, the King of Servia, he has left all the reins of rulership to Melena, who has ever discharged her duties wisely. Besides all this she has borne

QUEEN MILENA OF MONTENEGRO, THE MOTHER OF QUEEN ELENA.

him thirteen children. Elena was their fourth child. It was no inconsiderable thing when she was picked by the Prince of Naples to be his bride, because this meant she would eventually be a great Queen. Elena was born fairly in the lap of romance, and Fate has been extraordinarily generous to her in supplying her with exceptional romantic and dramatic episodes which, ever since she came into her own have served to bring her before the eyes of the world.

No Queen in Europe to-day, save the Tsaritsa and Queen Victoria Eugenie, looks more a Queen than Elena. She is stately and tall, with a statuesque poise that anywhere singles her from the throng. Her hair is as black as midnight forest depths, her eyes as luminous as live coals. Her skin is like unto olives, and her hands firm and strong and large. Her shoulders are broad and she holds them squarely. The impression the woman gives is of unusual physical strength. Nor could this well be otherwise in view of her athletic training. As a child she was always a devotee of Nimrod, given inordinately to the chase. Long after her marriage she continued to hunt,—to shoot deer and birds,—to ride to hounds, and play tennis. A modern Diana might she in verity be called. But her training was not restricted to sports and outdoor activities. Far from it. These were but natural incidentals to each day's work in Montenegro, and well it were if similar customs held the world over, for surely

there are no better physiques in both men and women anywhere on earth than in this same little Montenegro.

Elena's parents are both extraordinary people. Old Prince Nicholas is one of the most remarkable rulers in the world to-day. Like Julius Caesar, he boasts that he knows the names of all the men in his army, and as all of the men in Montenegro are of the army, his boast is practically that he knows all of his subjects. A ruler who interests himself thus deeply in the affairs of his state would naturally look carefully to his own family. And so when Elena was a wee baby just learning to toddle, the Prince used to take her upon his knee and give her her first lessons. Her first tutor, he used to call himself. He it was who taught her the letters of the alphabet of her mother tongue, gave her her first lesson in reading. His was the great hand that guided the little baby fingers as they laboriously traced the difficult Slavish hieroglyphics. Later, he interested her in geography and in history. Never a day passed when Nicholas was so occupied with the affairs of his kingdom, or with the knotty international problems that are forever engaging the troublesome little Balkan states and the great Ghoul Powers of Austria and Turkey that are ever lying in wait to gobble them up, that he neglected the lessons of his little daughter.

During the early years of her life Elena lived in the great square grey "palace" of the ruler of Montenegro in Cittenje. It is not a beautiful nor

elaborate home like most of the palaces of the sovereigns and rulers of Europe. Indeed, it is distinctly plain and unimposing, with bare and barren surroundings. The stern mountains of Montenegro rise abruptly behind the town, and the Palace is on the edge of the miniature capital almost in the shadows of the cragged hills. Here lived Prince Nicholas and Princess Melena, and all their children until one by one the latter married and drifted to other lands—Princess Zorka to become the wife of the present King of Servia; Princess Melitza to become the spouse of Grand Duke Peter Nicholaivitch of Russia; Elena to become the Princess of Naples and subsequently the Queen of Italy.

As a child Elena was always lively and active. In America she would have been called a "tomboy," for she preferred the company of her brothers to that of her sisters and it was through the pains of two of them—Danilo and Mirko—that she became expert with the rifle and rod, a familiar horsewoman, and so able a walker and climber.

The spirit of Elena was wild and free. She loved fresh air, a mad scamper over the hills, an adventure that savoured of danger. Encouraged by her father and brothers to all activities in the open she developed into a strong, stalwart girl and later into the Amazonian woman she is to-day. Long after her marriage she retained the fresh and breezy way acquired in girlhood.

An important influence in Elena's early life were the grandfather's tales she listened to round the

great fire in her homely Palace home. Montenegro, like all older mountain countries, has a folk tale and a legend associated with every crag and valley. Elena heard from her veteran grandfather how the Montenegran people battled with the Turks, and her little heart would fairly quiver with the heroic deeds of valour that the old man would relate of the stormy days when the Balkan peninsula was like a great seething cauldron, and men, and the women too, came down from the mountain fastnesses in their quaint and rude attire to fight the trained troops of European armies. Thus was her child's imagination fired, and love and pride of country aroused.

One day little Elena brought her father some sheets of paper upon which were drawn some strange pictures. The Prince held the sheets upside down at first, trying to make out what his little daughter had brought him. Elena was much hurt at this and she could hardly keep back the tears. But when the Prince turned the papers round the right way he quickly made out, under her guidance, the house and the mountain, and the dog chasing the sheep. Indeed, he admired not a little this first artistic effort of Elena's, and right there and then he sat down with her and together they drew the pictures all over again, only this time much better as Elena herself realised. This was the little Princess's first drawing lesson. After that Elena had a drawing lesson every day. She soon showed signs of a distinct talent in this direc-

tion and by the time she was ten years old she had not only conquered the first principles of drawing but she had also made considerable progress in the use of water colours. This talent Elena continued to develop, and with what success may be judged from the fact that when she was still a girl in her teens she became a kind of unofficial "Minister of Fine Arts" in her father's cabinet. She was instrumental in bringing art exhibits into Montenegro, in organising drawing and painting classes in the public schools and thus for the first time bringing the refining and civilising influence of art culture to her people. She even inaugurated scholarships to encourage art students, and to-day Montenegro has a number of ambitious painters who are actually building up a school of art of their own. Influenced by the picturesque barrenness of their native mountains, together with the gorgeous skies and brilliant atmospheres, they are developing an individual and nationalist school. To this day, Queen Elena retains her interest in the native Montenegran artists, and also in her own drawing and painting. In the Quirinal Palace in Rome she has a studio, where of an afternoon she may frequently be found spending an hour at her easel. It is her custom each Christmas to send as gifts to her more intimate friends sketches and little water colours of her own handiwork.

Elena had other tutors than her father and grandfather, however. From a young child she

had a Swiss governess who was her daily companion, and who instructed her in French, and supplemented the teaching of her father in the other branches. It is thus the training of Elena from childhood was the training not only of a Princess but of one who might easily assume the duties and obligations of a Queen. It is not likely that the little Elena ever dared to dream of what her future might be or that her imaginings ever pictured that in womanhood she might occupy a throne as the consort of the King of a great nation, but her father is one of the most astute statesmen in Europe, and with all his children he arranged their education so that they might be acceptable to any high niche in life to which destiny might call them.

CHAPTER II

THE ROMANCE

WHEN Elena was twelve years old an important change came into her life. She was sent away to St. Petersburg to enter the most wonderful school of its kind in the world. This was the famous, glorified boarding school for the daughters of the nobility which for many years has been patronised by the Empress Marie Feodorovna, wife of Tsar Alexander III and mother of the present Emperor, Nicholas II. Fancy a girls' school where every pupil is a little Countess or Princess or Grand Duchess! In Russia the family titles usually descend to the children, so that this is no exaggeration. This school corresponds to one which exists for boys known as the *Corps des Pages*—or school of pages. The young sons of the nobility are sent here at an early age and are commonly spoken of as pages of the courts. Most of the boys who go to this school become officers and generally are assigned to the crack regiments which guard the persons of the sovereigns. As a rule only native Russians are admitted to these two exclusive schools, but the daughters of Prince Nicholas were easily granted place, because they were the daughters of a ruling

Prince, and also because they had the rare advantage among non-Russians of already knowing Russian, or at least the Slav tongue which is very similar to Russian.

For six winters Elena continued at this school, and on her way to and from the northland capital she was taken to visit many of the famous art galleries of Europe. In St. Petersburg she had the privilege of the Hermitage Gallery, where is one of the foremost art collections in Europe, and in Dresden and Munich she became yet more widely acquainted with the masterpieces of the world's art. Thus was her fondness for art gratified, and her general education broadened and enriched.

Another talent that Elena inherited was that of writing poetry. Her father, Nicholas, is a poet of no mean rank. Many of the folk songs of Montenegro which mothers croon to their babes at night, which shepherds in their lonely huts far up the mountain sides sing to give them cheer when fierce storms are sweeping over their steep pastures, were written by the Prince when he was a young man and during the forty years of his reign they have become so universal that already they are classic. Once indeed he wrote a very long poetic and romantic drama called "An Empress of the Balkans," which his son, Mirko, Elena's oldest brother, set to music. And this poetic instinct which her father has made such good use of in endearing himself to his people, is also strong in

Elena. For some reason, however, Elena has never been so proud of this talent as of her painting. Nevertheless she has published minor verse from time to time, and as one member of her suite told me once: "She writes still—but she does not own it."

Curiously enough she once wrote a sonnet to Venice, which she called a "city of poetry, love and feeling." This sonnet was published in a school magazine, and was written before she had ever visited the romantic city of islands. It was in this same Venice that she later met the Prince who was to make her a Queen, and where the love story of her life began.

In the spring of the year 1895, when Elena was twenty-two years old, she and her sister Anna came with their mother, Princess Melena, to the opening of the annual International Art Exhibition at Venice. This is one of the events of the year in the art world of Europe and is looked forward to almost as much as the annual salon in Paris and the Spring Academy Exhibition in London. The King and Queen frequently open the exhibition, and not infrequently distinguished members of other Royal houses are also present. So it was in the memorable month of April 1895. King Humbert and Queen Margherita with their son, the heir to the throne, the young Prince of Naples, travelled up from Rome to inaugurate the exhibition. Of course courtesy calls were exchanged between the sovereigns and the other

Royal visitors present, including Princess Melena and her daughters.

Princess Elena was now a tall, large-framed woman of twenty-two. She had the physique of one much older, but her manner and face showed all the keenness and freshness of a young girl. By this time she had outgrown the hoydenish traits of her girlhood and there was dignity and repose in her manner. One feature distinguished her from other Princesses in Europe. She was totally free from the social veneer which comes inevitably from a long continuance of ceremonious life. Any Prince of a western European court would have been quick to notice this, and Prince Victor Emmanuel was by no means the least to fall under the spell of its charm.

Prince Victor Emmanuel as heir to the Italian throne was one of the most sought-after Princes in all Europe. Popular gossip had successively betrothed him to Princess Clementine, daughter of the King of the Belgians, to Princess Feodora of Schleswig-Holstein, sister of the Emperor of Germany, to Archduchess Annunziati, daughter of archduke Carl Ludwig of Austria; and to Princess Mary Magdalene, daughter of the King of Greece. The trouble with all of these alliances was, according to the Prince, that they were political rather than personal, and may it be writ large on the page of history that Victor Emmanuel had a romantic soul which would be satisfied whatever came of the political ambitions of his family.

THE QUEEN OF ITALY.

When grey and hoary councillors of state approached him in regard to the desirability of his marrying one or another of the Royal Princesses in the eligible list, he would shake his square head and turn aside saying, "I have time enough." He knew that one day he would see the Princess whom he would love, and for her he was content to wait.

When in Venice, "The city of poetry, love and feeling," he met for the first time Princess Elena of Montenegro, he promptly said to his Royal father, "There is the Princess I will marry." Politically, little was to be gained for Italy by a marriage alliance with the little Balkan state, so Humbert, a wise king, counselled patience, though not actually opposing the will of the Crown Prince.

Elena and her mother and sister returned to their own country after only two days. But in those two days the Prince had found a time and place to speak. Only two days! Surely a brief courtship with an interminable round of official ceremonies consuming, as it seemed, all of the hours. Two busy days, yet the Prince of Naples had whispered the thrilling words and Elena, the Balkan Princess, knew that her future was henceforth spread in greater Europe.

CHAPTER III

VICTOR EMMANUEL

VICTOR EMMANUEL was at this time considered one of the most desirable of eligible Princes in all Europe, not only because of his inheritance, but because of his intelligence and his character. Queen Victoria once called him "the most intelligent Prince in Europe." As a child he had showed marked individuality and his father and mother, King Humbert and Queen Margherita, both being people of strong characteristics, had reared him in an atmosphere of strictest discipline which naturally had its effect upon the man. Like Napoleon, the little Victor Emmanuel was never ashamed to ask any question, nor did he ever ask any question twice. Until he was twelve years old his school hours were regulated by the state of his health, which was never robust, but on his twelfth birthday, he was given over into the hands of Colonel Osio, a famous soldier and disciplinarian, who planned an eight year course of training which included regular hours for everything, and resulted not only in developing the boy's mind and sharpening his wits, but also in hardening his muscles and accustoming his constitution to all kinds of hardships and endurance tests.

One incident of this period of his life Victor Emmanuel has never forgotten. As a young boy he was not over strong, and frequently he contracted head colds. One morning he reported as usual at seven o'clock to his tutor, but coughing badly and his nose and eyes sorely inflamed. At eight o'clock Colonel Osio appeared to take the young Prince out for his usual hour of exercise on horseback. The day was rainy and disagreeable. The tutor ventured to suggest to Colonel Osio that their Royal charge was scarcely in fit condition to go out that morning. Whereupon the Colonel replied, "If war were declared to-morrow, would the Prince be allowed to stay indoors because he had a cold?" As the Colonel disappeared with the Prince the tutor exclaimed: "Ah! with these soldiers it is impossible to reason."

When Victor Emmanuel began the study of Latin, his mother, the beloved Queen Margherita, took it up also! One day, she proved to him that she had made better progress than he. At the time the Prince made no comment upon this, but a little later when his tutor started to chide him about this Victor Emmanuel retorted somewhat sharply: "That is all very well, but my mother has nothing else to do, whilst I have a hundred other things to attend to!" An answer that every schoolboy and schoolgirl will surely appreciate.

Colonel Osio was without doubt a stern disciplinarian. As he outlined the daily schedule for the Prince, the rising hour was six o'clock, summer

and winter. After a bath and simple breakfast, he sat down to his first lessons with his tutor. At eight o'clock he rode for an hour with the Colonel, then returned to his studies which continued all day. His very recreations were in the nature of studies, for being raised as a soldier he had to master all military tactics and to dig trenches, erect redoubts and obstructions with his own hands, so that in time of necessity he could the better command and direct his soldiers. As the motto set before the Prince was: "To know everything of something, and something of everything," his studies were pursued the year round. During the dead of summer his books were laid by, but he was taken out of doors and kept busily at work, learning of nature, or all about guns and shooting, and ever subject to the discipline of hours.

The instructions of Colonel Osio to his tutor were: "Treat the Prince as you would treat any other pupil. Show him no special consideration nor regard. Indulge him in absolutely nothing. For example, if, during a lesson something is wanted, he and not you must get it. If a book falls to the floor, he, not you, must pick it up! You must profit by his self-esteem, highly developed in him, to exact from him firmly and always the fulfilment of all his duties. "As for yourself," the Colonel continued, looking full at the tutor, "I want you to understand that the interests at stake are so great, that if you fail in any way I shall show you no mercy." As the tutor felt as much subject

to the rules and regulations laid down by the Colonel as did his pupil, it is needless to say that he was obeyed to the letter.

The Rev. Alexander Robertson who has lived many years in Italy, and who has made a searching study of the life of Victor Emmanuel, says that so completely did King Humbert give over the education of his heir to Colonel Osio that if the Prince even asked permission to accompany the King and Queen to the theatre the answer was invariably: "Ask the Colonel." Thus was the young King trained. If the "child is father to the man," from these gleanings of his boyhood and the stories of his early discipline, we may gather what manner of Prince it was who won the heart of the stately and beautiful Elena, Princess of Montenegro.

Mr. Robertson tells how on one occasion the little Prince Victor Emmanuel was playing with the small daughter of the Marchioness of Villamarina, who was then a Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Margherita, and the two children quarrelled, as all children will, over some trifle. Of a sudden the Prince became greatly enraged, and lost his temper. "When I am King I will have your head cut off!" he exclaimed loudly. Queen Margherita overheard these harsh words, and the Prince was put on prison fare for three days.

Victor Emmanuel and his wife, Elena, were destined to become sovereigns of Italy upon the tragic occasion when King Humbert was assassinated at his lovely mountain home of Monza in the

north of the Kingdom. An interesting, if nerve-straining incident occurred when the Prince was present at a previous unsuccessful attempt upon the life of his father. This took place when Victor Emmanuel was only twelve years old. The King and his son were just leaving the railroad station in Naples when a man named Passananti, calling himself an anarchist, made a lunge with a stiletto full at the breast of the King. A minister who was also in the carriage was quick enough to turn aside the glittering blade. The King, with superb poise, drew his sword, and crashed it broadside over the would-be assassin's head. Throughout the scene the young Prince sat immovable, not showing the slightest trace of fear. Courage may not be the highest virtue, but it is essential in a King, and in any one, never fails to excite admiration.

Queen Margherita was as exceptional a mother as she was an unusual Queen. As Queen Elena has of late years proved herself devoted to the Royal nursery, so Margherita always gave a large part of each day to the rearing of the heir apparent. She it was who insisted upon his keeping a strict account of all the money that passed through his hands. In this way he learned to appreciate the value of money—the little sums, the trifles which in themselves seem of no consequence, but which aggregate so large in the course of months. Under directions, he also kept a diary, in order that he might not be prodigal in the use of time—the

moments we are all so apt to waste carelessly and thoughtlessly a score of times each day.

It was the custom of the Prince to lunch with the King and Queen certain days each week. One day the King was occupied with his ministers much longer than usual, and the luncheon hour was long past. The Prince ventured to remark to the Queen, somewhat petulantly, that he was hungry and couldn't wait any longer for his meal. Crossing the room to a bookshelf, the Queen took a copy of Dante and laid it before the boy, saying: "Read this, and your hunger will all go."

Any boy, especially a Prince, would naturally possess qualities of attractive manhood that would appeal to a woman of domestic instincts. That Princess Elena possessed these innate qualities her life since testifies. To her, unquestionably, Victor Emmanuel seemed an ideal Prince. There was only one element to this romance which is distinctly unromantic, and of this Victor Emmanuel is very sensitive. He is a small man, distinctly undersized, while Elena towers far above him when they are standing side by side. Nowadays the King has his carriage in the Royal stables built with a specially elevated seat, like a coachman's box, so that this discrepancy in size is not so apparent when they drive.

CHAPTER IV

A ROYAL HONEYMOON

Now that we know more about Victor Emmanuel, we can follow the course of the love match between him and Princess Elena with more familiarity and interest. It is strange that these young lovers from two of the southermost, warmest countries of Europe must go for the second chapter of their romance to the northermost, coldest country on the continent. Yet so was it to be. Their next meeting was in far away Moscow, the occasion was the Coronation of the present Tsar. Here another coincidence appears. Four years before when Princess Elena was finishing her course at the Royal Academy in St. Petersburg she was presented at the Court of Alexander III through the influence of her sister, the Grand Duchess Melitza. Soon after this a rumour was circulated throughout Europe that the eyes of the young Nicholas, heir to the Russian Throne, had looked with favour upon the Montenegran Princess. Certain it is that Elena's father, wily Prince Nicholas, did not discourage this match, but the young Tsarevitch had long before set his heart upon a German Princess—Alix of Hesse and the Rhine—and if he looked upon Elena at all it was only an idle flirta-

tion, for his mind was made up in regard to his consort long before Elena went to Petersburg.

The Prince of Naples represented the Italian sovereigns at the Russian Coronation festivities, while Elena was a guest of her sister. Naturally, the two met. This was only their second meeting, but from the noticeable intimacy that immediately sprang up between them it was evident that the Venice meeting had been followed by a lively correspondence. The Coronation procession was the most splendid pageant of the closing decade of the nineteenth century, and the balls and dinners which were given in honour of the accession of Nicholas II to the throne of his fathers, the most magnificent that human ingenuity and unlimited wealth could devise. Against this golden background Prince Victor Emmanuel and Princess Elena pursued their courtship, indefatigably, if not always discreetly. Even the Tsar was not so engrossed that he did not observe the daring suit of the Italian Prince. Having a kind of paternal interest in Montenegro, Tsar Nicholas felt it not improper to express his good will toward these two sweethearts and it was largely through his personal interest and encouragement that the betrothal was finally arranged. When the coronation festivities were over and the myriad royal and noble guests from all parts of the world returned to their homelands, it was pretty generally understood that the Prince of Naples would presently wed the Montenegran Princess.

Toward the middle of August of the Russian Coronation year, to the surprise of no one, the Italian Royal yacht *Cajola,* having aboard the Crown Prince, rounded Cape S. Marie de Leucca, prow pointed toward Cattaro, the port of Cettenje, the capital of Montenegro. A large part of the Montenegran population gathered along the shore to welcome the Italian Prince. All knew what his coming meant. All appreciated, too, his coming in person, for Royal etiquette allows that on such an occasion a Prince may send an ambassador and Royal entourage to formally arrange the details of official betrothal and marriage. Cettenje was arrayed in gala dress as never before in its history. As a local newspaper quaintly but enthusiastically put it, "the twenty-five hundred people comprising the entire population of the capital met on the one street of the town shouting their greetings." Surely in this alone is romance enough for one lifetime, the Princess of a country whose capital has one street, whose entire population is twenty-five hundred, about to become the Crown Princess, and presently the Queen, of one of the first powers of Europe!

The official announcement of the betrothal was made August 18, 1896. Two days later a great hunt was organised by Prince Nicholas and his oldest son Mirko, in honour of the event. All of the Prince's household and all of the suite of the Prince of Naples were invited to participate. The two lovers alone declined. At such a time, they

said, when they were both so happy they preferred not to spill one drop of blood, for that would be to mar their own happiness! For two young people unusually keen for the hunt and both splendid shots, this was indeed a delightful sentiment.

Shortly after this hunt the Prince of Naples returned to Rome to begin preparations for the reception of his bride. On the second day of October—just six weeks later—Elena held her last conference with her father, who brought her to the quay where lay the ship that was to convey her to Italian soil. When Prince Nicholas had said his last farewell and kissed his beloved daughter on both cheeks, he turned and slowly climbed the hill behind the town, on which stands a chapel. Entering the tiny church the Prince fell to his knees and there remained for a long time absorbed in silent prayer.

When he emerged once more, the ship to which he had consigned Elena was but a speck in the distance, across the deep blue waters of the Adriatic. They did not meet again before the marriage, which took place in Rome.

Elena landed at the Italian port of Bari. Her first act was to go up to the old town church, and there be received into the Roman Catholic Church. Montenegro, like all Slav countries is still under the domination of the Greek Catholic Church, and it was in this Church that Elena had been reared. The difficulties of her release from the Greek Church were made simple by the personal appeal

of the Tsar of Russia, whose influence is all powerful with the Greek hierarchy, who bespoke a friendly word on behalf of the young Princess.

The marriage was to take place in the great hall of the Quirinal Palace. An incident occurred at this time, which, though trifling, is not wanting of a certain savour.

The private apartment of Queen Margherita had been designated for the formation of the cortège. Prince Nicholas and Princess Elena, by inattention, or because it had been omitted to inform them, entered the Quirinal from the stairs of honour and found only the Mayor of Rome who had come to assist at the marriage. Happily the Prince of Naples had witnessed this scene from the window of the Palace. He ran immediately to relieve their perplexity and escorted Prince Nicholas and his own Princess to the Queen's apartment.

When the time of the ceremony arrived, Count Gianotti took the head of the cortège. Behind the King and the Queen walked Prince Nicholas and Princess Elena, the Duke of Oporto and Princess Laetitia, Prince Victor Napoleon and Princess Helena of Aosta, the Duke of Aosta and the Dowager Duchess of Genoa, Prince Mirko and the Duchess Isabel of Genoa, the Count of Turin and Princess Anna, sister of Princess Helena, and then the Civil and Military houses of the sovereigns.

Monseigneur Auzine brought a silver veil that the Duke of Aosta, the Count of Turin, Prince

Mirko and Prince Harageorgevitch, to-day King of Servia, unfolded and kept over the bride and bridegroom during the whole ceremony.

After the ceremony Elena was more than ever nervous and deeply moved; her olive skin grew exquisitely white, almost like alabaster. The sun, which up to that moment had loitered behind clouds, suddenly broke through the misty screen, suffusing the whole city in a glorious fulsome light. The bells of the American Church in Rome nearby, began to chime the Wedding March from Lohengrin, and from the great Roman populace gathered in the streets near the Palace went up a tumultuous cheer. Thus propitiously began the married life of the most romantic Royal couple of that time in Europe.

To compensate for their all-too-brief courtship, Prince Victor Emmanuel decided that their honeymoon should be protracted, and far from the eyes of the curious. To accomplish this they went at once to the distant isles of Greece, to the romantic coast of Sicily, to wherever waters are emerald, skies azure blue and the days golden. In their own yacht they managed to escape from all public vision, and so weeks and months were spent like a prolonged summer idyl. Never were lovers more secluded, more care-free, more at ease, less trammelled to live with and for each other, as fiercely and as intensely as the flame within them burned. The world heard little of them on this long honeymoon trip of theirs. Sometimes a mes-

sage came from an Algerian or Tunisian port, or from a remote Mediterranean spot like the Island of Monte Christo, where they spent untold happy weeks.

This Island of Monte Christo, belonging to Victor Emmanuel, is very secluded. Only the members of the household are allowed thereon. The Prince liked being there free of all responsibility and unrestrained to enjoy absolute liberty.

As a bride Elena gave herself to a unique régime for a Royal Princess—she shared in the household work, performing with her own hands the duties of the home. This policy was adopted because the young couple dreaded to have others, even servants, about them, and this lonely island was, perhaps, the only place where they could find absolute seclusion and isolation.

This Royal property, which for a certain time was called Gombo, was the favourite residence of the grand dukes of Tuscany. It formed a part of the private estate of Victor Emmanuel II, who, as an indefatigable hunter, used to make there a hecatomb of deers and fallow-deers. About 1865 he ordered the building surrounded at a distance of twenty yards from the shore by a wood fence posed on pillars; he often spent there the night, lying on a couch in order to hear, on his awaking, the rocking song of the waves.

Once during their protracted honeymoon Elena and her Prince went on a great hunting trip far up in semi-Arctic regions around the White Sea.

I have heard tales of this trip from the lips of a Montenegran artist who was one of the party, and I have seen photographs of Elena and her Prince-bridegroom skurrying across frozen ice packs, bringing down Arctic game with their rifles, fishing through the ice for great deep sea fish—filling the days and weeks with pure pleasure, storing up joy against the years when the cares and responsibilities of state should hold them ever close to home. For four years this dream life went on. Then, in the summer of 1900, they were on one of their long cruises among the Greek Islands when they were rudely awakened. News reached them of the assassination of King Humbert! Both Elena and Victor Emmanuel knew what this meant. Their yacht was quickly turned toward Italy. This was their last care-free cruise.

At this time Victor Emmanuel shut up within his heart the tortures he was enduring, to meet as a courageous man the duties imposed on him by that misfortune. But Elena, who had become devoted to her new family, was completely overcome and abandoned herself wholly to her sorrow, weeping and crying aloud: "My father!" "My good father!"

On their journey to Monza, the scene of the tragedy, and on their arrival at the station at Naples, Elena, weeping bitterly, pressed on the bosom of her Lady-in-Waiting. Victor Emmanuel, by the side of the Duke of Genoa, looked almost overpowered by sorrow, but he bore up bravely. He

invited the Prefecto and General Brusate to come near him. He shook hands with them and talked to them with a heavy voice veiled by tears. "It seems to me," said he to them, " that I am under the effect of a dream; such a horrible murder seems to me impossible!"

With the tragic death of King Humbert, Prince Victor Emmanuel became king, and his Montenegran Princess Elena, Queen of Italy. In nearly every country where kings and queens sit upon thrones, the Coronation ceremony is a spectacle of great splendour and magnificence, but in Italy it is scarcely a ceremony at all. So far as the Queen is concerned, it amounted to nothing, while the King merely appears before the Parliament and takes his vows of allegiance and devotion to Italy and the Italian people. The simplicity of this sacred occasion is in peculiarly fitting keeping with the mind and character of Victor Emmanuel.

For four years he and his bride had basked in the sunshine of love and romance. They had led the most ideal and romantic of lives. With their accession the more serious business of life began. Elena presently became a mother, first of a girl, then of another girl, then of a son, and then of a third daughter.

CHAPTER V

ELENA THE MOTHER

THE prettiest sight I know in Rome is when the Royal Princesses and the little Crown Prince, Humbert, go driving. I lived for a winter in an apartment adjoining the Quirinal Palace, so that it frequently fell to me to catch glimpses of the Royal Family going or coming. Like the King and Queen, they drive out almost daily during the months the Royal Family spend in the capital, but it was the little ones who always caught my eye and made me turn to watch so long as they were in view. Usually there are the three girls, and a nursemaid holding the Prince on her knees. Their carriage is an ordinary two-horsed, double-seated coach. Immediately behind the carriage always ride two guards, on bicycles, men in plain, dark-blue clothes with knee breeches. A stranger in the city would not even notice them, although if one were observant he might observe many of the passers-by lifting their hats and turning to watch. Almost every pleasant afternoon, when the King is in residence in Rome, immediately after lunch, or on a Saturday forenoon, the children are driven just outside the walls of Rome to Villa Savoy, a playhouse which is all their own. During that portion of

the year spent in Rome this is practically the only change they have from the Palace nursery and the Quirinal gardens—the latter by no means a cramped play-ground. When the Duke of Ascoli, Gentleman-in-Waiting to Queen Elena, first showed me these grounds I was quite astounded by their extent and their unique beauty. There are long avenues of boxwood hedges, groves of dark firs and picturesque parasol pines, fields of untended grass and acres of carefully nurtured flowers. And all this behind the dull yellow Quirinal walls, fairly in the centre of the city. But any growing kiddies long for more than the yard of a city home, though that yard attain the proportions of a park, and the home be a Palace. Villa Savoy supplies the want, and here the children have their ponies and their pet donkey. Here Queen Elena, too, finds relief and refreshment, for the quiet of the children's playhouse is never intruded upon by the court or visitors who are not intimates of the Royal Family.

The Italian sovereigns are striving to purify and elevate the atmosphere and tone of their court so that their children may grow up in sweet home surroundings, protected from the careless waywardness of the aristocratic world of Europe. Some call it a "straight-laced" court. One influence which may be responsible for this may be traced to an incident in the schoolboy days of the King.

When the King was a youth of sixteen he deter-

mined to change his handwriting from the ordinary sloping hand in universal vogue to the so-called vertical. The formula which he took for his motto was, "Writing straight, paper straight, body straight." This boyhood motto has been before him ever since. One of the first things the present King and Queen Elena did, upon their accession to the Throne, was to attach to their persons *only* married couples. Ladies-in-Waiting to the Queen could only be married ladies whose husbands were during the same period Gentlemen-in-Waiting to the King. This was an early step toward elevating the moral standards of the Italian Court. Italian aristocracy had not been renowned for virtuous living, but the present sovereigns holding to a high standard of morality determined to purify the court in so far as in them lay by banishing from active service all ladies and gentlemen whose names had ever been bandied by current gossip. This crusade, if it may be so called, was aided by the existing laws of the country which are still sufficiently under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church to prohibit divorce. No divorced man or woman has standing in Queen Elena's court. King Victor Emmanuel is himself extremely devoted to his Queen and this devotion has often led to his being charged with intense jealousy. Whether or not this is true, his attitude toward Elena has resulted in her more and more withdrawing from the companionship of people of the court and devoting herself to her children. It is

a pretty picture, that of the home life of this Queen. Six months of the year the Royal Family live at the Quirinal Palace in Rome. The remainder of the year is spent at various palaces and castles in different parts of the Kingdom, but chiefly at Monza in the North, where the summers are delightful. The long cruises and excursions that they were wont to indulge in previous to their accession —cruises in the Mediterranean and the Levant, hunting trips to Spitzbergen and the far North— are now a thing of the past, and a simple home life is their daily régime.

The marriage took place in 1896. Their first child, Yolanda, was born June 1st, 1901. Royal babies are never permitted to do with only two or three Christian names. They must perpetuate the names of grandfathers and grandmothers, and not infrequently of uncles and aunts and grand-uncles and grand-aunts besides. Thus the full name of the first little Italian Princess is Yolanda Margherita Milena Elizabeth Romana Maria! The next little Princess, born November 19th, 1902, was christened Mafalda Maria Elizabeth Anna Romana. On the 15th September, 1904, at the Château of Racconigi the boy was born. This was a momentous day for Elena and Victor Emmanuel, for the boy, if he lives, will eventually occupy the throne of his fathers, and the birth of a Crown Prince is a matter of utmost importance in the household of a Royal Family, and indeed in the

THE ROYAL CHILDREN OF ITALY.

annals of a nation. Queen Elena had been married eight years, all but one month, when His Royal Highness Prince Humbert arrived. There was some difficulty in finding suitable names for the future King, especially a first name which he would carry as King. The Royal Household was divided between the name of Victor Emmanuel, after his father, and Charles Emmanuel. The choice was finally left to the baby Prince's Royal father who said, "it was a good custom which was followed in some families of naming the first girl after the grandmother and the first boy after the grandfather." So the name Umberto, or Humbert as we write it in English, was chosen.

Since the birth of the Crown Prince, one more child has been born to Queen Elena, a Princess, who is called Giovanna. She is still a wee child, having been born as recently as November 13, 1907.

Princess Yolanda, the first born, has colouring and features very like her mother, while Mafalda and Humbert are more like their father.

Queen Elena herself spends a great share of her time with the children, and while they have the usual nurses and governesses, the latter of whom are already teaching the three older children French and English in addition to Italian, Queen Elena perhaps does more with her own hands than any other Queen mother in Europe. For example, she always bathes them, she is present at their supper hour and when they are being made ready

for bed; each afternoon she tries to spend two hours with them at their play. Thus their training is very largely in her hands. The children are all very young still, but the two older girls are beginning to appreciate the love and devotion of their mother, for little Mafalda recently remarked to a gentleman of the court: "Mamma is the comfort of everyone in trouble."

The Queen's birthday falls on January 8th. The year of the terrible earthquake at Messina Her Majesty returned to Rome from the devastated regions on the eve of her birthday. This year, oppressed by the terrible scenes she had witnessed, she abolished all of the usual festivities in her honour and devoted the forenoon to superintending the making of garments for the Messina orphans in one of the Quirinal Palace rooms which she had made into a temporary workroom. In the afternoon she made a round of the Rome hospitals, visiting all of the "earthquake children," and with her own hands distributing sweets and little gifts, thus endeavouring to bring a gleam of sunshine into their darkened lives, and helping them for the moment to forget their sufferings. When someone spoke to her afterwards of this beautiful way of celebrating her birthday, she replied: "When these children grow up they may remember my birthday." Her own children, too, were encouraged on this occasion to remember the wounded and orphaned victims. Instead of purchasing presents for their mother, according to their usual custom,

they put the money into the Relief Fund, to which all the world was contributing. Little Prince Humbert brought his favourite plaything, a set of toy soldiers, to his mother and said: "Take this for the poor children."

CHAPTER VI

SIMPLICITY OF THE ITALIAN COURT

THE Italian Prince and Princesses, though they live in very beautiful Palaces, are simply brought up, and are not encouraged to have extravagant toys. Formerly, and even now sometimes, it has been the custom of foreign Ambassadors to the Italian Court, and even other sovereigns, to send gorgeous toys, and magnificent great dolls as big as the Princesses themselves, to these children. Queen Elena, fearing to have them grow accustomed to toys so much richer and better than other children, had taught them to surrender these things to poor children by sending them to hospital wards. Now the playthings of the Royal children are just ordinary toys like those that most children have and enjoy.

The Queen endeavours to make her children forget that they are of Royal blood, or in any way different from other children. In this particular she is very different from the Tsaritsa, who never allows her children or her court to forget that her son will one day be an Autocrat and Tsar of all the Russias, that her daughters are Grand Duchesses, and must, therefore, be kowtowed to by every Prince and granddame of the court.

While I was in Rome, Queen Elena related the following anecdote of her own children, which illustrates her simplicity of attitude toward the Italian Prince and Princesses.

The young Prince Humbert was recently put through an examination by his two older sisters, who wished to have an experience of their brother's knowledge about colours.

Yolanda, pointing with her hand to the cloth of a piece of the furniture, asked: "What colour is this?"

"It is red," Humbert readily answered, without mistake.

"And that other piece of furniture, what colour is it?"

For the second time the young Prince gave a right answer.

"It is green," he said.

But Mafalda wanted to take part, too, in what they intended to be the first examination of the future King of Italy.

"What colour are your small shoes?"

Here the matter became rather complicated. As far as it was a question of usual colours, little Humbert had found no difficulty in answering, but now, looking at his small shoes, he found that they had to him an unknown colour. But he was not discouraged, especially as he perceived on his sister's lips a light smile, which could not be interpreted as of approval. It was clear that his wily sisters were teasing him.

"Well, what colour are they?"

Vanquished? Not he. "My shoes are 'Marron glace,'" he replied.

Yolanda and Mafalda laughed gaily at that answer, and little Humbert, considering himself scorned by them, began to weep, and ran to his mother for help.

Queen Elena endeavoured to explain to the little examiners that the Prince's answer was right, as the little shoes had really a beautiful chestnut colour bright and brilliant.

Humbert is not fond of being quizzed by his sisters, and he is rather inclined to be resentful. Indeed, this little Crown Prince is a born soldier of a fighting disposition, and many a nursery quarrel does the Queen have to settle. He is ever ready to defend with great boldness his small soldiers, his guns and his swords and other favourite toys, which Mafalda and Yolanda attempt sometimes to take from him. Humbert has one amusing weakness. He is fond of the two black eyes and beautiful little face of one of his sisters' dolls. Sometimes he wants to take possession of this doll. Unhappily, his sisters are not always disposed to let him have it.

Ordinarily Humbert is glad to assume rather a martial air, and to dress in military uniforms. But the uniform that he likes best is a smart one of a Cuirassier regiment with boots, cuirasse and helmet. The little fellow distinctly prefers the company of boys of his own age, and he enjoys the little

friends that he is allowed to have, and who are the children of the Ladies at Court.

One of these little friends, a boy of five years who showed himself enthusiastic over his Princely friend, was asked if he loved him much.

"Yes, I love him very much, because he never complains when they take something belonging to him, and he never cheats," he replied.

"And Yolanda and Mafalda, and the little Giovanna?"

"Yolanda and Mafalda, I like them also, but they always laugh at us men!"

Yolanda, who is especially beloved by all those who live closely to her, has always been a lively young girl with a frank and gay smile. Being the eldest sister, she endeavours to look in some manner the wisest and most serious, and she is at the same time the most charitable and kindly. In fact, it is known to everyone, that many times she answers the letters that the little girls of the people address to her continually, by sending to them as a gift some of her own toys, of which she willingly deprives herself.

There is in her a lovely soul, which appears in a thousand ways and especially in the unlimited affection to her parents.

An old friend of the Queen's once asked her to show her an ancient photograph very dear to her, representing Queen Elena having Yolanda on her lap, when she was only two or three months old.

The Queen afterwards sent for Yolanda, and

showed her the photograph. The little Princess, seeing her mother in the portrait, asked with suspicious anxiety who was the child she was keeping in her lap.

"She is a dear baby, of whom I am very fond," said the Queen.

Yolanda's face turned very serious, and after she looked again at the photograph, she could not abstain from showing a certain contempt.

"Don't you see how ugly she is, Mamma? Throw it away."

"You are wrong," the Queen answered, "you are this baby. It is really you when you were very little."

Then Yolanda smiled gladly, and changing at once her opinion, she said, with plenty of content: "Oh, yes, she is very handsome. You may keep it."

Yolanda is in fact so affectionate to her mother that she hates in her heart all those duties which keep the Queen away from her. She, as also Mafalda and Humbert, like much better the beautiful days spent wholly near their parents, among the green hills of Racconigi, Sant' Anna di Valdiere, and San Rossore.

Victor Emmanuel, leaving all cares of state in the full liberty of his acts, thinks only to play with his children from whom he never is widely separated, and who are really his all-absorbing joy. Even in Rome, the King, his duties accomplished, spends the rest of each day in the intimacy of his family.

CHAPTER VII

THE HEROISM OF QUEEN ELENA

ITALY'S Queen has a wonderful reputation the world around for her heroism and daring. More than once she has rendered signal and distinguished service when great disasters have visited her country, so that this reputation is not undeserved.

I have some personal knowledge of this side of her character and it is a privilege to give her full credit. There are other sides of her life as a Queen, however, in which she falls lamentably short of her position. Of these I shall have to speak also.

Queen Elena and the King were in Rome at the time of the great earthquake which devastated Southern Calabria and the western tip of Sicily. No sooner had the first authentic reports reached their Majesties than they started for Messina, travelling to Naples by special train and then by the Italian cruiser *Regina Elena.* As it happened, I arrived at Messina, also by sea, at almost the same moment as the Flagship. I was put ashore, to visit the wrecked city, in a small boat, and not one hundred yards away a little drab launch was bouncing over the rude waves toward what was left of a slanting stage, bearing King Victor Em-

manuel. On the deck of the *Regina Elena,* anxiously watching each rise and fall of the little boat, stood the Queen. From almost the same angle I could watch the progress toward shore, only when the King stepped ashore I was much nearer, and therefore could see more distinctly the panic-stricken survivors hurling themselves madly at the feet of their King, and could hear much better the wild shouts: "Vive Vitorio Emmanuele!" It was a strange, weird hurrah, coming from the lips of the bereaved, the sorely stricken, the wounded, the dying. Certainly it impressed me deeply. Later, from an officer aboard the cruiser, I heard that the Queen was moved as never before in her life, and well she might be. Before her, in endless panorama, lay the ruined, smoking city. The King, and the crowd he attracted, loomed big on the quay, the foreground. Behind, stretching to the orange and lemon clad hills which after a mile rise abruptly to a great height, lay the biggest pile of human suffering, of dead bodies and pinioned, starving living that the world has known in many centuries. Yet out of this ghastly picture arose the cry: "Long live the King!" "Long live Queen Elena!" Truly it was overpowering. The Queen stood it as long as she could, and then with her hands pressed to her face she went sobbing to her cabin.

After an hour the King returned to the ship. The Queen met him at the gangway. Now her tears were dried. She wore a long nurse's apron,

and from that hour, so long as she remained near the scene of disaster, Queen Elena worked as a nurse. With her own hands she bandaged the bleeding. She assisted at amputations and other serious operations and from time to time she visited other ships that were caring for the injured and spoke the cheering words, which, coming from the sovereign, meant so much more than any stimulant.

In connection with this dire catastrophe there was at least one incident that was full of humour. M. Tardieu, a French journalist, had occasion to visit the Minister of Marine who was of the Royal party aboard the Flagship. When Tardieu had finished his business, the Minister, pointing to a parrot which was occupying a prominent place on the deck, related this story:

"A squad of Italian soldiers at work among the ruins heard a voice crying 'Maria,' 'Maria.' They dug for hours getting nearer, but always the voice cried unceasingly 'Maria,' 'Maria.' At last when they reached the room from which the sounds were coming they found not a human being but a parrot. But, in the adjoining room was Maria, a young girl, alive and well. When the Queen heard of this she sent to have both the parrot and its mistress brought aboard the Flagship." As the Minister finished relating the story, M. Tardieu doffed his cap to the bird and began a garrulous speech of congratulations. At that moment the King appeared on deck and seeing the French-

man addressing the parrot in all solemnity and dignity he paused to listen. Tardieu, looking up and seeing the King, again removed his hat and salaamed low. Whereupon the King advanced smiling, with extended hand. He chatted with the French journalist for a few moments and sent an informal message to the French people. The account of the adventure Tardieu published under the clever caption: "How a Parrot Introduced Me to the King." This girl was only one of many whom Queen Elena became interested in in Messina, and who have become her special charges now in Rome—wards of the Queen.

The example set by Queen Elena in going to Messina was followed by scores of ladies of the Italian court, who left their homes, and, boarding warships and joining relief expeditions, served as volunteer nurses. They established field hospitals all along the devastated coasts and among the hill villages. It was splendid, heroic service and must be so recorded. Between the work of the ladies of the court and the work of the Queen was this difference only. The Queen remained for five or six days, while the others remained four or five weeks. The Queen was decorated by half the monarchs of Europe—not so the others. But being the Queen, and having gone there at all, setting the example of personal service, her mite (comparatively) counted for more than the actual work of all the others combined.

When Vesuvius vomited forth its torrents of

flaming destruction a few years ago, Queen Elena and the King at once set forth in an automobile upon the same mission of comfort and mercy. And again, when Calabria was visited by a lesser earthquake, in 1905.

Italy, one is sometimes tempted to believe, was the last place God made, and he has never rested satisfied with His handiwork. No country that I know has a more tragic history. Death in horrible forms is forever sweeping over some portion of the land, while geological changes under the earth are shaking, jostling and altering her surface contour. Ever since Elena became Queen she has worked with zeal during the dark days of these numerous calamities. Fate has been strangely, rudely kind to her, too, in ordaining that she should be near at hand on many occasions when accidents have befallen—railroad accidents, fires, as well as dire disasters. Always has the Queen hurried to the danger point and risen to the crisis.

When a collision took place between two trains one dark night, at "Castel-Giubileo," the Queen, immediately informed, was the first ready to run to the spot of the catastrophe. The horrible scene that appeared, the painful screams of the wounded, the great number of victims, brought tears to her eyes. But the anxiety which possessed her, could not make her forget her duty. While the King himself was organising the help, she, the young Queen, was stooping over the wounded, encouraging and comforting them. A

woman, whose limbs were broken to pieces, was lying on the road. The Queen rushed to her, kneeled down, kissed her and tried to encourage her to fortitude. She pursued all the night her consolatory work and left "Castel-Giubileo," only after she was satisfied that not a single victim had been forgotten under the remains of the ruined trains.

CHAPTER VIII

ELENA THE QUEEN

In view of the long list of dramatic, if terrible, events that have from time to time made Queen Elena the most striking figure in Italy, it would be the simplest matter in the world for her to make herself the most popular Queen on any throne in Europe. As a matter of fact, in spite of her heroism and her daring; in spite of her romantic girlhood and idyllic years of early married life—which strongly appeal to the naturally sentimental Italian people—in spite of her charming home life, there is no doubt that she is one of the most unpopular Queens in Europe. Her court, which, to meet the tastes of her people, should be bright, popular, brilliant, is really the dullest, the most stupid in the western world. I have lived in many countries, and I am more or less familiar with all the countries of Europe, but never have I heard a Queen so universally spoken of with disrespect and disapproval by her own court. Of course, Queen Elena cannot be charged with the sole responsibility, for the King shares the opprobrium and may, after all, be the one to blame. It is, nevertheless, a disappointing task that is set the chronicler of Italian court life of to-day. Elena, as we

have seen, was born fairly in the lap of romance. Her life should have worked out to an ideal fulfilment. Extraordinary opportunities have been hers, but she has never taken advantage of the great popularity they have given her. A Queen's life is one of stern duty, intensely hard, and excessively demanding from many quarters. Queen Elena, in an American phrase, "plays to the gallery," then retires. She garners the wheat and ignores the chaff. She is quick to follow dramatic exploits, but reluctant to submit to the daily grind.

The Duke of Ascoli, personal friend and adjutant to the Queen, was much embarrassed when I asked him to tell me about the charities of Queen Elena. He mentioned Calabria, Vesuvius, certain children's hospitals and orphanages, and there he paused. It is, to me, inexplicable that a Queen who as the Princess of a little State like Montenegro should have done so much for the people of the country, been a patroness of the arts and done all the things that Elena did, and then, as Queen of a great nation do so little. Rightly or wrongly, Queen Elena has the reputation among her own people for being the stingiest Queen in Europe. Apparently this is true. She patronises almost nothing at all, regularly, and if once in a while she lends her name to appear on a public bill, it usually means this and nothing more. So far as is known, she gives less to charity, in proportion to her means, than any Queen. In this she is in unhappy contrast to the Queen-Mother who, when

she was on the Throne, did very much to encourage painting, music and sculpture throughout Italy. This fact rather discredits the only excuse I have ever heard offered for Queen Elena, namely, that she and the King have many Palaces to maintain, inheritances which have come to them from the many dukedoms and little states which were brought together to make up "United Italy." Queen Margherita and King Humbert had the same number of estates, but their charity and philanthropic list was long and striking.

Queen Elena has one boast. She says that less has been written of her than of any Queen in the world, and she is very proud of it. My own impression is that Queen Elena realises that if more of the facts of her selfish nature were made world-wide that she would cease to be the object of veneration that she is to-day. If the world at large appreciated to what extent she has carried her ideas of simplicity in dress, the glamour that surrounds her would fade. It is impossible to worship a dowd—especially if the lady be a Queen with all the splendour and taste of the world at her hand.

I have seen her driving in the Campagna, or even through the streets of Rome, when I would never have believed her the occupant of her exalted position, had I not known her. It is somewhat ungallant to dwell upon these things, but Queen Elena *can* wear good clothes, as her court costumes testify. It is because she simply *doesn't,* that

makes her a slouch in dress. One need not be extravagant in clothes to be tasteful, but Queen Elena is not even tasteful. Here again, she is in unfortunate contrast to the Queen-Mother who, still living in Rome, is always exquisitely gowned, and no matter how simply, always with unerring taste. Queen Elena is, indeed, sorely handicapped by the presence of Queen Margherita in the capital, for her popular affection will last as long as she lives, and a woman of Elena's calibre can never, even at best, supplant her.

The most ungracious task in the world is sometimes to tell the truth. When writing of Kings and Queens, one is expected to write in adulation. I have done my best for Queen Elena, in telling the story of her younger life in all its vivid and alluring colouring; and I have paid full tribute to Elena, the Mother. But the picture is not yet complete. Elena the Queen is, after all, of first importance to the nation. We, in America, believe that the institution of kingship—"divine right of Kings" and all the rest—is largely archaic twaddle. Queen Elena, of all living Queens, illustrates the emptiness of Queenship as it exists to-day. I would not give the impression that the Queen and King of Italy are cruel tyrants like the lately deposed Sultan of Turkey, or autocrats like the Tsar and Tsaritsa of Russia; nor are they active elements in the social life of the nation like the Kings and Queens of England and Spain, or the Emperor and Empress of Germany. What Queen Elena

and King Victor Emmanuel represent, however, are, the biggest of social parasites. They draw an enormous revenue of many millions annually from a heartbreakingly poor population, and give the minimum in return.

I am quite aware that I speak in no measured terms, but a surprising number of people in Italy —men and women of the Court—have begged me to state the truth concerning their sovereigns to the world. Perchance they themselves may take from the lips of an unbiassed observer from overseas what no one of their subjects dare to say. While not an apostle of social revolution in Italy, I may perhaps be so suspected, unless I state that it is the full indifference to everyday affairs of the Italian sovereigns, especially the Queen, that breeds the widest discontent. The Italian court, as a whole, is not politically restless so much as discouraged and disgusted with their apathetic monarchs.

The four years of blissful honeymooning enjoyed by Victor Emmanuel and Elena seems to have spoiled them for taking up the tasks of sovereigns. They seem to have lived too much unto and for themselves. One indication of this is the almost ludicrous jealousy of the King. He guards Elena with the greatest care, and few indeed are the male members of the Court who ever approach her save on formal occasions. The sovereigns always have their meals alone together. It was the custom of the former monarchs to have the King's

adjutant and the Queen's lady-in-waiting at the table; at dinner there were nearly always guests. Not so Victor Emmanuel. He prefers to be as much as possible alone with his spouse, and never entertains at dinner save when duty demands it. It must be said that he gives Elena a true and loyal devotion and he is one of the very few, if not the only monarch in Europe, against whom no word of unkind gossip has ever been spoken.

The closely watchful attitude of the King may be in some measure responsible for the impression which is pretty general that Elena is a timid, shy woman. There are several anecdotes recalled to illustrate this trait, each of them, to me, interesting.

One afternoon, near the beginning of her reign, Elena had attended a function given by the Dowager-Queen. Queen Elena arrived somewhat late and reached the door of the Salon unattended. There was a large company present and Queen Elena paused, as if in embarrassment, until Queen Margherita, seeing her, came forward and taking her by the hand led her into the room.

On the rare occasions when Italian Royalty patronise the theatre or opera, Elena, if she knows the Queen-Mother is to be present, arrives a little late, and leaves a little early, so that the homage Queen Margherita had been accustomed to during so many years may still be hers.

Social shyness is a thing apart from physical courage, of which, we all know Queen Elena has

SNAPSHOTS BY QUEEN ELENA: THE KING AND HER CHILDREN.

an abundance. The formalities of ceremonial court life are irksome to Queen Elena, and the afternoon "teas" that she holds for the court are stripped of all their formidableness by the present mistress of the Quirinal.

Among the English colony in Rome is an aged lady whom Queen Elena calls to court once every year for a tête-à-tête. During the past year she has grown very deaf. Queen Elena had obvious difficulty in making herself understood, and to her very evident embarrassment the old lady noticed this and said, apologetically: "I am so sorry, your Majesty, that my hearing inconveniences you." "Oh," said the Queen, "I did not know that you were deaf. Come, sit here on the sofa by me." This, surely, was worthy of a Queen.

That Queen Elena positively dislikes social functions there can be no question. For three successive winters there was practically nothing whatever done to stimulate the social life of the capital on the part of the sovereigns. One year the reason given for the postponing of the court balls and receptions was the Sicilian disaster. Another year it was the death of the King of Portugal. Other courts went into mourning for thirty days. The Italian court cancelled everything in the nature of festivities for the year. This has a very serious economic result. Rome is one of the least commercial capitals of Europe. The social season at best is brief—three to four months—and upon this

little season many of the shopkeepers have to rely for the bulk of their trade. The tourist trade does not begin to compensate for the loss of the social season. In every other capital in Europe the presence of Royalty at all star occasions throughout the season lends a brilliancy that seems to be lost to Rome for ever—at least during the lives of the present monarchs. The old Roman families do the best they can to bolster up Rome's fast fleeting prestige, but the Royal Box is nearly always empty. More often than not it looms up in the centre of things like a ghost at the feast. Each year, fewer and fewer foreigners go to Rome for the season, and this is laid directly to the door of the sovereigns. It must be borne in mind that this sort of thing means very much more in Europe than it does in America. There is no city in the United States that could possibly be affected in this way, but since it is of so much importance in Italy it must be mentioned here. This is one of the prime grievances of the people of Rome against the King and Queen. If Queen Elena were the wife of a country minister in our country, she would be beloved by all who knew her. Her domestic virtues, her simplicity of taste and manners, her fondness for children would all be extolled. It would then be no drawback that her vision was not extended, her horizon so narrow. She would be a splendid woman to organise Dorcas societies, to teach the Infant class in the Sunday School, and even to get up Thursday night socials. Alas! however,

she is a sovereign, and of a sovereign so much more is not merely expected but demanded. The way Queen Elena has shirked her daily chores—court functions, audiences and interest in national activities—during the last few years is a matter of national comment. "She promised so much, she has achieved so little!" one hears on every hand.

The Elena of to-day does not seem the same Elena who came from Montenegro. The reason for her change of character is beyond my ken. But these are facts. As a Queen, Elena comes close to the line of failure. Each time she steps into the blaze of popular admiration the sentiment toward her seems to change, but I notice that like the fickle waves of the sea, this quickly recedes.

Queen Elena has always been given to hobbies, and as her children take to one hobby or another their regal mother shares their enthusiasm and interest. The King, too, has one hobby that he has indulged in since boyhood and that is the collecting of coins. This fad he took up when he was a very small boy. According to his own statement it was in the year 1879 that one rare coin fell into his hands and he determined to make a "collection." To-day his collection is reputed the largest and finest in Italy. With him, the collecting of the coins is but part of the hobby. Around each set of ancient and obsolete coins he has grouped a summary of historical facts so that his collection, if studied carefully would constitute an education in itself. I have been told that the

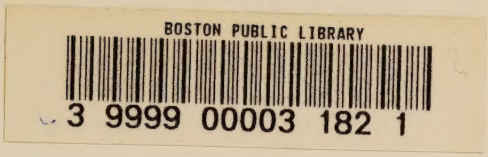
King has nearly sixty thousand different coins! A friend writing to Senator Morandi who is intimately familiar with the life of the King, asked how Victor Emmanuel had time to make collections of this sort. To which the Senator replied: "In the midst of all the cares of State, by his indefatigable capacity for work, aided by a rare promptitude of perception and by a prodigious memory, he finds time to follow every scientific and literary movement, and to attend to this collection." As a matter of fact, this is the King's one hobby. The Queen, on the other hand, still indulges several. In the Quirinal Palace in Rome she maintains a studio where she spends many an afternoon working over her sketches and water colours. Her interest in the coin collection is rather recent, and at bottom only nominal. It is my impression that this interest on her part is primarily for the sake of her children who will one day own this interesting and valuable collection. The King once related to Senator Morandi, in a personal letter, the origin of this collection. "I got my chance," he said, "a soldo (one cent) of Pius IX and I kept it. Afterwards I got another which I put with the first. Presently I secured fifteen different coins of different kinds. Then my father gave me about seventy different copper coins. These formed the nucleus of my collection." For several years Prince Victor Emmanuel pestered every one he knew to give him old coins, especially at Christmas and on other gift days. Before long

he had a collection of three thousand pieces. And now it has attained the proportions of twenty times that number. Recently the King testified that this collection has been "an efficacious aid to him in his study of history and geography. Besides which, when I have time I always find something useful and pleasing to do, either arranging my coins or searching in books for dates for this purpose!" Many an American and English boy and girl has a collection of coins and this testimony of King Victor Emmanuel may be an incentive to them to continue this hobby, and to make the most of it by following the scientific example of the King in carefully and accurately preserving the full data concerning each coin.

Queen Elena is still a young woman. If the time ever comes when she determines to throw as much energy and enthusiasm into the everyday work of Queenship as she does on the special occasions of crisis she may yet make her mark upon Italy. So far she has not done this. In these chapters I have tried to portray Queen Elena as she is —a real live woman who enjoyed a romantic youth; who made a brilliant marriage; who is a devoted wife and mother; a mediocre Queen. I have written without malice and without prejudice. My task is done if my readers can now visualise Queen Elena—can picture her in her mountain home, a daring, untrammeled girl; can see her as she is to-day, active in her domestic tasks, lunching and dining and driving with the King, bathing

the babies and watching over their early slumbers. For to-day Elena is wife and mother above all else —and Queen incidentally as well as accidentally. It is my impression that the Queen business bores her utterly; else she would not do it so badly.

THE END



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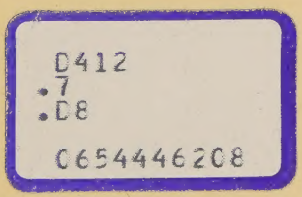

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